MR. MOM

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EIGHTH DRAFT

FIFTH REVISIONS

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MR. MOM

FADE IN:

1 EXT. THREE BEDROOM HOUSE - PRE-DAWN 1

A yellow Colonial in a quiet, orderly, middle-class suburb of Detroit. It's late summer.

2 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - SAME TIME 2

CAROLINE BUTLER: 30, wholesome and attractive, awakes next to her husband of eleven years. She quietly sits up in bed and turns off the clock radio seconds before the alarm goes off.

She takes a moment to study the face of her sleeping husband... JACK BUTLER: boyishly handsome, mid-30's... then she carefully slips out of bed and tiptoes across * the darkened room, into:

3 INT. MASTER BATHROOM 3

Caroline splashes cold water on her face -- causing her to take a deep breath, as she looks at herself in the mirror... Then she turns on the shower.

4 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 4 *

Caroline opens the drawn curtains, FLOODING the room with early morning SUNLIGHT and gently shakes her sleeping husband.

CAROLINE
(softly)
C'mon, Jack... wake up.

Jack groans and stirs... squinting up at Caroline.

JACK
'Mornin'...
(stretching)
... slept like a log.

Caroline kisses him, then:

CAROLINE
I'm glad. Your shower's ready.

She gathers up the clothes from the day before and exits.

5 INT. 2ND BATHROOM - SAME MORNING 5 *

As Caroline passes through, she squirts toothpaste on two tiny children's toothbrushes, lays a pair of washeloths on the edge of the sink and turns on the water. We SEE a child's potty on the floor.

6 INT. MASTER BATHROOM 6

As Jack enters and leans into the mirror to get a first-hand look at the damage. This is not a man without a care in the world. He takes the toothbrush, squeezes some toothpaste and starts to brush his teeth, as he straggles into the shower.

A beat, then:

JACK (O.S.)
Damn.

A pair of wet pajama pants are tosses onto the shower floor.

7 INT. BOYS' BEDROOM - SAME MORNING 7 *

Caroline opens a dresser and takes out some neatly folded clothes and sets them on the end of each bed. She drops a pinch of fish food into a large fish tank, then opens the blinds, FLOODING the room with LIGHT.

She grabs one little foot poking out from the covers of one of the beds and gives it an affectionate tug.

CAROLINE
Alex...

ALEX BUTLER is 6-years-old, wiry, introspective -- clearly the intellectual of the family.

ALEX
(yawning)
Hi, Mommy.

CAROLINE
Hi, Sweetheart. Sleep good?

ALEX
Um hmm. I'll wake Kenny.

Caroline leans down and kisses him.

CAROLINE
Be nice. And don't touch his "woobie," okay.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 7 *

Alex nods, smiles.

As she exits, we notice a large "Rocky" poster over the beds. Alex turns on his RADIO and pulls down the covers on the adjoining bed... We SEE a tiny pair of feet on the pillow.

D.J.'S VOICE
(over radio)
... on the rock of Detroit...

Alex peels the blankets off to reveal 4-year-old KENNY BUTLER, sleeping in an inverted position, sucking his thumb, clutching a tattered, worn baby blanket.

Alex waits a beat, then grabs a corner of the baby blanket ("woobie") and tugs.

KENNY
(screaming)
Alex... don't... no!!

8 INT. BABY'S NURSERY 8 *

Caroline opens the curtains and quickly moves to the crib, where the 16-month-old MEGAN BUTLER smiles up at her.

CAROLINE
(taking Megan)
'Morning, Baby.

9 INT. MASTER BATHROOM 9

Jack stands before the mirror, his sleepless mind cloudy, as he fiddles with his electric razor... trying unsuccessfully to make it work.

Caroline enters, holding Megan, picks up the mess Jack's made of the bathroom and plugs in the razor. The NOISE of the RAZOR embarrasses Jack.

JACK
(sheepishly)
Thanks.

Jack and Caroline exchange a knowing look, then she exits.

10 CLOSE ON SMALL TELEVISION 10 *

Early morning cartoons dance across the color screen.

11 INT. KITCHEN - SAME MORNING 11

Kenny is making a mess of his bowl of cereal while watching the cartoons, as Alex reads the newspaper while eating his cereal. Megan is in her walker fooling with her bottle.

Caroline is buttering toast, wiping up spills, putting things away, bundling up the trash... Just a few of the thousand things mothers do in the mornings.

Jack, dressed in his three-piece suit, comes bounding in... ready for work. He rubs his hands together gleefully.

JACK
(to whole family)
'Morning!

Jack sits, as Caroline walks out the back door with the trash bag. He looks into his coffee, then around the table... Finally, he borrows Megan's bottle.

JACK
(continuing)
Excuse me, Megan.
(to boys)
What is green and rides through the West on a white horse?

He squeezes a fine stream of warm milk from the bottle into his coffee, returns the bottle to Megan. She smiles.

JACK
(continuing)
Thanks.

The boys exchange a look, shrug.

JACK
(continuing)
The Lone Pickle!

The boys giggle and laugh. Abruptly, a car HORN HONKS.

JACK
(continuing)
They're here. Gotta go.

He takes another quick swig of coffee, tousles the kids' hair and head out of the kitchen... Caroline quickly follows him with his briefcase. *

12 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - MORNING 12

Caroline and Jack stand in the front doorway and kiss. Jack leaves.

HOLD on her a beat as she watches.

13 CAROLINE'S POV OF JACK 13

Walking toward the Ford LTD parked at the curb.

CAROLINE (O.S.)
Call me later.

Jack waves and gets into the car...

14 BACK TO CAROLINE 14

A mixture of love and concern plays across her pretty face as she watches the LTD pull away.

15 INT. LTD - MOVING 15 *

JINX LATHAM, the driver, is in his late 30's. Sitting next to him is STAN NOBLE, a young executive type, who is probably a few years younger than Jack.

In the back seat is LARRY WILLIAMS, a robust man in his early 40's. There is a tentative air in the car.

JACK
Who holds the world's record for the least amount of sleep?

STAN
I think it's Lindberg.

JACK
I think I beat him last night.
(beat; then)
Heard anything, Jinx?

JINX
If I did, wouldn't I tell you guys?

LARRY
(sarcastic)
Not necessarily. You didn't tell Lou until after he chipped in for gas money.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 15

JINX
Hey, Lou's a bleeder. I had to be careful with him. I was walking on eggshells with Lou.

Jack, Stan and Larry exchange a glance.

JACK
(prying)
But, you would tell us, wouldn't you, Jinx?

JINX
Tell you? You know that hurts me. You guys are family. Of course, I'd tell you.
(beat; then)
You think I like pink-slipping guys who helped me get where I am today?

LARRY
Like me?

JINX
Exactly. Tears my heart out every time. But, fellas, it's as simple as this, can't sell cars, can't pay people.
(trying to lighten things up)
Relax, I like splitting gas four ways...

A moment, then they all laugh...

16 EXT. EDSEL FORD EXPRESSWAY - DAY 16

Jinx's LTD sails down the on-ramp and into traffic. As the car is lost in the distance, we see downtown Motor City and its familiar skyline.

17 EXT. BIG THREE AUTO PLANT - ESTABLISHING - DAY 17

As the LTD pulls up.

18 INT. BIG THREE AUTO PLANT - ASSEMBLY LINE 18

Several automatic welders clamp down on a partially assembled body. Sparks fly as the welds are made. As the welders release the now welded body, Jack's face pops up into view... he's pleased with the process. *

(CONTINUED)

18A INT. ASSEMBLY LINE - ANOTHER ANGLE 18A

The partially assembled bodies enter a circular assembly where the doors are attached... again sparks fly as welds are completed. Jack surveys the action, watching it with growing enthusiasm.

18B INT. ASSEMBLY LINE - ANOTHER ANGLE 18B

Jack watches several workers guide some of the car bodies into position for additional assembly. They spot him watching:

AUTO WORKER #1
Havin' a good time, Butler?

JACK
It's a real kick watchin' something go from the drawing board to the assembly line.

AUTO WORKER #2
(sarcastic)
Yeah, it's thrillin' for us, too.

JACK
What's the matter? You guys depressed about the Lions? Pre-season, relax. They're slow starters.

AUTO WORKER #3
We ain't worried about the Lions, man. We're worried about the lines.

JACK
Lines?

AUTO WORKER #3
Yeah, unemployment lines... food lines... all those lines.

JACK
(nods, then)
Ya know, my wife and I were in a line the other night... a movie line, we saw "Rocky." It kinda reminded me of us...

AUTO WORKER #1
Which one?

(CONTINUED)

18B CONTINUED: 18B

JACK
Which one...? "Rocky."

AUTO WORKER #2
One, two or three?

JACK
I don't know... one, I think. Anyway, he was taking a pretty bad beatin'... his left eye was closed...

AUTO WORKER #2
Who was he fightin'?

JACK
I don't know... a real mean dude. Where was I, oh, yeah... he was comin' off the ropes...

AUTO WORKER #2
Did he have a mohawk?

JACK
I don't know... and he was standin' toe to toe, takin' body punches...

AUTO WORKER #1
Was his manager, dead or alive...?

JACK
Look, forget "Rocky"... I'm sorry I brought it up. The point is... just because you're down, doesn't mean you're out!

Just then, a VOICE BOOMS from a LOUDSPEAKER.

VOICE
(over loudspeaker)
Jack Butler to Third Floor South. Jack Butler to Third Floor South.

JACK
(to Auto Workers)
Catch you guys, later.

As he walks off, HOLD on the three Auto Workers... they suspect that he's not going to be around long.

A19 INT. BIG THREE AUTO PLANT - DAY A19

As Jack walks toward the stairs he passes a fellow engineer, ART. Jack waves.

JACK
Hi, Art. How you doing?

Art hides his face and pretends not to see Jack...

B19 INT. BIG THREE AUTO PLANT - STAIRWAY - DAY B19

As Jack climbs the flight of stairs he meets another engineer... MIKE.

JACK
Hey, Mike... What's happening?

Mike quickly waves as he passes Jack and disappears down into a doorway.

19 INT. HALL OUTSIDE JINX LATHAM'S OFFICE 19

A frosted glass door with the name "MR. LATHAM" stenciled on it. Jack stops in his tracks as he sees:

20 JACK'S POV 20

Larry is trying to strangle Jinx. He has him bent over his desk. Stan is trying vainly to pull Larry's hands loose.

A21 BACK TO JACK - THROUGH GLASS DOOR A21

As he reacts in horror:

21 INT. JINX'S OFFICE 21

As Jack rushes in and helps Stan in finally pulling Larry off Jinx. They seat Larry on the other side of the office while Jinx tries to gasp some breath back into his life.

JINX
You crazy son-of-a-bitch. What'd you do that for?

LARRY
Why didn't you tell us this morning that we were getting canned? Coulda been really drunk by now.

This shock wave hits Jack.

JINX
I didn't know 'till just now.

JACK
What? You fired Larry and Stan? After all they've contributed?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 21

JINX
Jack...

JACK
The years of devotion...

STAN
(to Jack)
You're fired, too.

Jack jumps at Jinx's throat.

JACK
Fired!?

21 CONTINUED: 21

STAN
Laid off.

Stan and Larry pull Jack off Jinx... *

JINX
Technically... furloughed.

JACK
There's gotta be some middle ground here. Put us on half salary, keep our profit sharing. Things gotta turn around.

JINX
Jack, you're talking about the future. If there's no today, where's tomorrow. I'm telling you, there's blood all over my slide rule.

JACK
None of it yours, Jinx.

Stan stares off into space.

JINX
Hey, c'mon, something'll turn up. You guys are terrific engineers. You're too damn good not to catch on somewhere.

JACK
Maybe Tokyo, huh? Nagasaki? The Ruhr Valley?

Jinx laughs a little too heartily at Jack's joke.

JINX
And you're not exactly walking out of here empty handed. You're getting full severance, your profit sharing, and here... Guess what? A surprise... * *

He places three little bundles of money on his desk.

JINX
(continuing)
... a full pro-rata refund for this month's gas.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2) 21

LARRY
Great. There's only one more thing I want.

JINX
What's that?

LARRY
(rising)
Disability.

Larry heads full steam toward the window, in an attempt to fling himself from the fifth floor. Fortunately, Stan and Jack grab him and start pushing him back out of the office. As they pass Jinx:

JINX
Keep that sense of humor, buddy. It's critical.

Larry breaks free of Stan and Jack and hurls himself at Jinx...

A22 EXT. TAXI - MOVING - NIGHT A22 *

We HEAR the mingled DRUNKEN VOICES of Jack, Larry and Stan SINGING the Alka Sletzer jingle: "Plop, Plop, Fizz, Fizz; Oh, what a refief it is."

B22 INT. TAXI - MOVING - NIGHT B22 *

Jack sits between Larry and Stan. All of them hold cardboard cartons on their laps. They SING again.

22 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - NIGHT 22

The taxi pulls up to the curb. A taxi door opens and a * tipsy Jack gets out, carrying his cardboard carton. * Stan's and Larry's heads appear out the window. Larry's eye is twitching.

LARRY
(yelling)
Hey, Jack...! Keep in touch...

JACK
You okay, Lar?

LARRY *
Why?

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: 22

JACK *
'Cause you're winking at me.

LARRY
Just a twitch... It'll be gone *
by tomorrow.

Larry and Stan laugh.

JACK
Way to go. Keep that sense of
humor, buddy. It's critical.

Jack waves at the moving cab, then turns a little uneasily toward the house...

A23 INT. HOUSE - FOYER A23 *

Caroline and the kids are waiting in the foyer for Jack. Caroline is holding Megan. Kenny sits at her feet fiddling with his "woobie." Alex stands beside his mother, straight and tall, the perfect little man.

ALEX
Does Dad know he got fired, yet?

CAROLINE
(tolerant; fixes
Alex's hair)
Yes, he does. But, we aren't
going to say anything about it.
We just have to make him feel good.

Alex pokes Kenny.

ALEX
You hear that?

Kenny looks up at him and nods.

CAROLINE
Here he comes. Big smiles.

23 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - EVENING 23

Jack adjusts the cardboard carton in his arms and opens the front door.

24 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING 24

Jack enters.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 24

JACK
I'm ho...

He stops dead in his tracks, as he sees:

25 JACK'S POV 25 *

Caroline and the kids wait for him.

JACK (O.S.)
(trying to be cheerful)
What is this? You guys all got dates?

26 BACK TO SCENE 26

As Jack sets his carton down.

KENNY
No. We're all dressed up because you got fired.

CAROLINE *
(hushing Kenny)
Laid off... laid off.

JACK
Technically, furloughed. *

ALEX
But, you're not a bum, Daddy, * are you?

JACK
(trying to be cheerful)
No, but I'm working on it.

KENNY
(holds out his blanket) *
Do you want my woobie?

JACK
No, thanks, baby... what I'd really like is a kiss.

Jack picks up Kenny and gives him a hug. Alex, and * Caroline with Megan, join them in a big family group hug.

DISSOLVE TO:

27 INT. DINING ROOM - LATER 27

Caroline is cleaning up. Jack's sitting at the table with a cup of coffee.

Abruptly, Jack grabs her and pulls her onto his lap and kisses her.

JACK *
You know what? I don't know why, but, I'm feeling sky-high.

CAROLINE
Um hmm...

She stands up and goes back to her cleaning.

JACK
(trying to reassure)
Actually, we're in pretty fair shape.

CAROLINE
... for awhile.

Caroline goes into the kitchen.

28 INT. KITCHEN 28

Caroline enters the kitchen. Jack follows her.

JACK
What do you think, I'm never going to get another job?
(beat; then)
Relax, I already put the word out...

Caroline wipes the sink dry with a dish towel.

CAROLINE *
What would you think if I did, too?

JACK *
If you did too, what?

CAROLINE
Put the word out...

Jack seems very surprised. *

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: 28

CAROLINE
(continuing)
Well, I do have a degree and a couple years' experience in advertising, and I thought... *

Caroline opens the dishwasher and loads it with soap.

JACK
Whoa! Am I missing something? Has your phone been ringing off the hook?

CAROLINE
No, but...

JACK
You think you're going to get a job before I do?

CAROLINE
Jack, this is not a contest.

JACK
It ain't, huh? Got a dollar...?

CAROLINE
What?

JACK
C'mon, doll face. Just give me a dollar. *

She goes to get the dollar from the cookie jar. Jack goes and opens the kitchen door and calls off.

JACK
(continuing)
Alex... Kenny...

Jack turns back to her and takes the dollar out of her hand and puts it on the kitchen table. He then takes money out of his pocket and peels off a $100 bill. He places the "C" note next to the dollar.

JACK
(continuing)
This is out of my severance, I want you to know that.

Alex and Kenny enter the kitchen. They're in their pajamas.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2) 28

JACK
(continuing)
You guys are witnesses. I'm giving your Mommy a hundred-to-one odds she doesn't get a job before me.

CAROLINE
Jack, this is ridiculous.

JACK
You're holding the money, Kenny.

Alex snatches the money away, and:

ALEX
I'd better hold it, Dad. Money makes him crazy.

REACTION SHOTS of Caroline and Jack.

DISSOLVE TO:

29 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - A COUPLE WEEKS LATER 29

Multi-colored leaves blow across the lawn in the brisk early Fall freeze.

JACK (V.O.)
Take it, Caroline.

30 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING 30

The family is at the breakfast table, but we hardly recognize Caroline. She's dressed in a suit, looking very pretty and sophisticated.

CAROLINE
I don't want your money, Jack.

JACK
A bet is a bet. Give her the money, Alex. You edged me out, okay?

CAROLINE
(smiles)
Honey, you're being too tough on yourself. You applied to everything on wheels from Toyota to Schwinn. And besides, my job is only temporary. * *
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 30

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
(tries to be light)
So, at best, I only win fifty.

Caroline smiles as in "Please let me off the hook, here."

Jack heaves a deep sigh.

Caroline glances at her watch.

CAROLINE
Well, I guess I should get going. First day, I'd like to make a good impression.

JACK
You're going to make a great impression.

Caroline instinctively grabs a paper towel and, in what seems like one movement, wipes Kenny's hands, face and the table in front of him.

Jack takes the paper towel away from her and starts to usher her from the kitchen.

CAROLINE
Now, remember, when Kenny starts talking to his breakfast, that means he's through. Alex has to be at school at seven-thirty. Pick him up at one.

ALEX
And don't be late, because I cry if I'm the only one left. Because, what if you never came and got me and I had to live there?

Jack follows Caroline through the kitchen door.

31 INT. DINING ROOM 31

Caroline is talking as she walks backward toward the front door.

CAROLINE
Megan goes down for her nap when she starts rubbing her ears. But don't let her sleep past eleven-thirty, or she won't go down for her afternoon nap, which is about one-thirty.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

JACK
Will she rub her ears again?

CAROLINE
Just in the morning. And, please, don't let her sit in a wet diaper. Kenny will pretty much take care of himself if you keep him involved in something. Alex'll be your helper.

Alex and Kenny have followed them into the dining room. Jack and Caroline continue their way backward toward the front door.

CAROLINE
Y'know, a lot of men would love to have this kind of time to spend with their kids.

JACK
There's one standing right in front of you.

They are now at the front door. Caroline looks at the kids and then Jack, fondly.

CAROLINE
I'm gonna miss you guys.
(to boys)
Be good to Daddy, he's a rookie.

Jack opens the front door as Caroline hugs the boys, kisses Jack and goes...

32 CLOSE ON JACK 32

As he watches Caroline leave... a mixture of love and envy plays across his face.

A33 JACK'S POV OF CAROLINE A33 *

She holds up his briefcase and points.

CAROLINE
Thanks for the loan.

She smiles and waves.

33 INT. FOYER 33

Jack closes the door and turns around.

34 CLOSE ON JACK 34

His smile melts away. Fear creeps into his eyes, as he stares ahead blankly.

MUSIC: Ethereal, other worldly-type sting.

35 JACK'S POV - DISTORTED WIDE ANGLE 35

"TWILIGHT ZONE" view of the house and Alex and Kenny. Suddenly, there is a FLASH of LIGHTNING and a CLAP of THUNDER outside. An omen.

36 CLOSE ON WINDSHIELD WIPERS 36

As they slap the pouring rain from the window of Jack's station wagon.

37 INT. STATION WAGON 37

Jack is driving, with Kenny next to him and Alex at the window. Megan's in the baby seat in the back. The kids are not on their best behavior. Jack's proud of himself ... he's got everyone in the car. *
*

JACK
How about this... right on time.

38 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD GRADE SCHOOL - MORNING 38

Ford, Chevy and Volvo station wagons, Jeep Wagoneers, etc., are lined up on the street and into the drive. Jack's station wagon wheels slowly past the traffic and several Detroit school buses and pulls into the other end of the circular drive. *

39 INT. JACK'S STATION WAGON 39

ALEX
(worried)
Dad! You're not supposed to go this way. Mommy doesn't do it like this.

JACK
Well, I'm not Mommy. Mommy's like all those other women waiting in line behind each other like sheep. I do it by the Jack Butler method.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 39

He stops the car. A thin, middle-aged woman, ANNETTE MARCH, the neighborhood busybody, looks in the window. She's wearing a big yellow rain slicker and sou'wester. She smiles at Alex, a big, warm, Mr. Rogers smile. She speaks to everyone as if they were three years old; slow, deliberate and sweet.

ANNETTE
Hi, Jack, I'm Annette.

JACK
Hi, Annette.

ANNETTE
Caroline said that you'd be driving Alex for awhile.

Jack nods.

ANNETTE
(continuing; deadpan)
You're doing it wrong.

ALEX
See?

JACK
(embarrassed)
Sorry.

ANNETTE
This is what I tell all new "Mommies." We enter from the south and exit from the north. And we do just the reverse when we pick up. That way our little ones don't have to walk between the cars to get to the learning facility.

She opens the door for Alex. Jack hands him a magazine.

JACK
Keep this on your head until you get inside.

Annette shakes her head at the makeshift raingear, leads Alex back around the cars, and frees him to run into the school. She then pats Jack's car and backs away.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2) 39

ANNETTE
Move it out. And remember...

ANNETTE
... south to drop off, north to pick up.

JACK
South to drop off, north to pick up.

Jack manages a smile and pulls carefully ahead. As he weaves upstream against the waiting cars, half on the drive, half on the lawn. He waves apologetically. The other Mommies HONK their HORNS and shake their fists at him.

MOMMY
(yelling)
SOUTH to drop off, moron!

40 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DOWNTOWN DETROIT - MORNING 40

Caroline crosses the wet courtyard and enters the sleek, modern steel and glass building in the heart of the business district. She is carrying Jack's attache case.

41 INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA 41

Caroline gets off an elevator and walks timidly down the short hall to the offices of: RICHARDSON/FRANKEL ADVERTISING. She walks into the reception area.

The reception desk is alive with actors, actresses, agents, reps, art directors, photographers, salesmen, you name it. Caroline makes her way through this sea of humanity to the receptionist.

42 INT. RECEPTION AREA - A LITTLE LATER 42

Caroline sits between a painfully thin, high fashion, model and an overweight, bearded, avant garde artist. * Caroline is a bit uneasy as she watches another woman approach.

EVE METZ is in her 30's, an aging beauty... makeup's a little too heavy, the blouse, a little too revealing.

EVE
Mrs. Butler?

Caroline rises from her chair and smiles.

EVE
(continuing; shaking her hand)
Eve Metz. Follow me, please. *

43 INT. HALLWAY - RICHARDSON/FRANKEL ADVERTISING 43

Caroline has left her attache case somewhere as she dodges a hurrying art director with fresh storyboards and tries to keep up with Eve, through the noisy, busy corridor... *

CAROLINE
I'm so excited about going back to work and being here and working with Ron.

EVE
(icily)
"Ron?" Who would Ron be?

CAROLINE
Ah... Ron Richardson.

EVE
(icily)
Everyone here at the Richardson/ Frankel Agency calls him "Mr. Richardson."

CAROLINE
(defensively)
Well, he asked me to call him Ron.

EVE
(quickly)
When was that? In what context?

CAROLINE
In the context of my interview at lunch.

EVE
Lunch?

They arrive at the door to the conference room.

EVE
(continuing)
Now, before we go in here, let me give you some advice. Keep your mouth shut and your ears open and you just might learn something.

As Eve opens the door, stale cigarette smoke wafts out.

44 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM (COVER FOR TV) 44

EXEC. #1
That is monkey squat.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: 44

EXEC. #2
Well, your idea is squirrel shit.

Eve grins at Caroline's discomfort.

Caroline looks around the room. It is a mess. Ashtrays are filled to overflowing. The air is stale and stuffy with smoke. There are several advertising layouts taped to the walls.

Several EXECUTIVES has been going all night searching for a marketing solution. One of them (Exec. #5) is a wiry, middle-aged, chain-smoking woman. They're all tired and worn... Tempers are hot.

Eve points out an empty seat for Caroline, and sits down herself next to the head of the table. The Executives hardly take any notice of them. They continue their argument. Another Executive (#4) points to the layouts on the wall.

EXEC. #4
Well, which one of these are we going to go with?

EXEC. #5 (FEMALE)
They're all kaka.

Exec. #1 flips a pencil at the layouts he's so unhappy with.

EXEC. #3
(angry; offended)
Dumping all over everything isn't going to sell tuna fish.

EXEC. #4
Knock it off! Ron? What's your position?

All heads turn toward the head of the table, where RON RICHARDSON sits. He's about Jack's age, handsome and fit, wealthy and powerful.

RICHARDSON
My father founded this agency with Schooner Tuna... It's the cornerstone of our accounts. So, my position is, somebody better find a way to sell some tuna pretty damn quick! *

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (2) 44

The room falls silent, tense. Caroline nervously starts cleaning the area around her. She empties an ashtray into the pizza box and closes it. She sets it aside. Her motions are smooth and quick, like she was in her own kitchen. The Executives stare at her... She realizes she's being scrutinized and stops.

RICHARDSON
(continuing)
We have people who do that.

CAROLINE
(laughs nervously)
Sorry, habit. *

RICHARDSON
Oh, everybody, say hello to Caroline Butler.

Greetings are mumbled from all over the room.

RICHARDSON
(continuing)
Caroline's just come aboard as a Junior. She'll be trouble-shooting with me.
(to Caroline)
Since you're the only one in the room who got any sleep last night, maybe you have a fresh opinion...
(pointing)
Take a look at those layouts. Anything make sense?

Caroline looks around the room at all the tired faces, catches the icy stare from Eve, then:

CAROLINE
I'm not qualified to judge anything. Really. This is my first day...

RICHARDSON
You ever eat tuna fish?

CAROLINE
Yes, but...

RICHARDSON
You're qualified.

There's no way out. She looks around at the layouts. The other Executives don't think much of the idea.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (3) 44

CAROLINE *
Well, I like the colors in this one... and...

RICHARDSON *
Caroline...

CAROLINE *
Yes?

RICHARDSON *
Cut the crap.

CAROLINE
Right. You want me to be honest * with you...?

One of the guys groans. Another tosses a pencil in the air.

EXEC. #2
(chuckling)
No, lie to him, he likes it!

CAROLINE
I don't think <u>any</u> of this would influence me.

Comments such as: "Listen to this shit," "Ninety Day Wonder," "Harriet Homemaker," "A real team player," * "Take a hike, Blondie," are HEARD. Caroline bristles * at the negativity.

RICHARDSON *
(hushing the room)
Go on, Caroline.

CAROLINE *
(continuing; firmly)
Well, look, the fact of the matter is... Schooner Tuna's too cheap! Most tunas...

EXEC. #3
Too cheap?! The country's going in the toilet and she says it's too cheap!

CAROLINE
Offering recipes doesn't mean anything if the tuna's lousy... and why would I want a fifty cents off coupon for something I won't buy.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (4) 44

More groans from the room. The Executives have had enough of the inadvertent insults.

EXEC. #1
(to Richardson)
Come on, Ron. She doesn't know her ass from a Cheerio!

Exec. #2 lets out a horse laugh. Caroline flashes him a puzzled look.

EXEC. #3
Damn good thing we don't have the Cheerio account!

The men break up. Caroline looks hurt and confused and angry.

45 CLOSE ON RICHARDSON 45

He is studying Caroline carefully. He leans over to Eve and whispers something to her. Eve frowns, but nods okay.

46 OMITTED 46 *

47 INT. SUPERMARKET - CLOSE ON JACK - AFTERNOON 47 *

As he enters with Megan and Kenny. Jack's eyes widen as he takes it all in. *

47A JACK'S POV 47A *

Of the busy, crowded, LOUD supermarket. *

47B LINE OF SHOPPING CARTS 47B *

Jack struggles with one, trying to get it unstuck from the others. He tugs hard... abruptly, the handle comes off in his hands. He quickly puts the handle back on... and takes another cart. *

47C CLOSE ON FOUR BAD WHEELS 47C *

Of Jack's shopping cart... trying to move down an aisle. *

47D PACKAGED GOODS AISLE - JACK 47D

Pushing the bad shopping cart. Megan's in the seat, Kenny is sitting in the basket.

Jack's lost and confused. He consults his shopping list, then:

JACK
Where do I find the eggs, Kenny?

Kenny's arm shoots out to the right. Jack wheels around the aisle and rams into another shopping cart being steered by a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN, in a jogging suit.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN
I beg your pardon! I have the right of way.

JACK
(making light)
Sorry, I just got my learner's permit for this thing.

His joke is not appreciated. The woman wheels away angrily. Jack watches her go and turns left into another aisle... off screen. We hear a CRASH! Moments later, several cans of beans roll down the floor from the direction Jack went.

VOICE
(over loudspeaker)
Irv. Accident on aisle four!

48 INT. SUPERMARKET - PRODUCE SECTION 48

Jack stands next to the loose potatoes bin. He selects one... this starts an avalanche of potatoes... cascading onto the floor. Jack tries to stop them -- it's too late.

A uniformed, GIRL in her early 20's approaches.

GIRL
(frowns)
How did this happen...?!

JACK
(embarrassed, quickly covering)
Kenny! I've told you a dozen times! Keep your hands inside the cart.
(to Girl)
Sorry.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: 48

Jack quickly wheels away as:

VOICE
(over loudspeaker)
Irv! Spilled vegetables in produce.

52 INT. SUPERMARKET - DELI COUNTER 52

A YOUNG GIRL is waiting on Jack. He's referring to his list.

JACK
A pound of ham.

GIRL
Boiled? Baked? Smoked? Salt cured? Sugar cured? Virginia? Proshuto? West Phalian?

A couple of people line up behind Jack.

JACK
Forget it. Make it half a pound of salami.

GIRL
Italian? Kosher? Hard? Beef? Pork? Cotto? What?

Some more people fall in behind Jack.

JACK
Never mind. I'll just take a quarter pound of cheese.

GIRL
American? Blue? Cottage? Cream? Edam? Gouda? Provolone? Romano? Swiss? Then there's the Cheddar family...

The line behind Jack gets longer.

JACK
(rubbing his brow, interrupts her)
Could you give me the hams, again...?

49 INT. SUPERMARKET - PAPER PRODUCTS AISLE 49

Jack's eyes shift back and forth sneakily. He's like a spy, a thief. He reaches out -- abruptly, two ladies walk down the aisle talking. He ducks back, trying to act nonchalant as they pass.

When the coast is clear, he reaches out again.

50 CLOSE - TAMPON BOX 50

Jack grabs the box.

51 BACK TO AISLE 51

As it suddenly erupts with activity. A dozen women, chatting, pushing carts, reaching for similar products. Jack shrinks away.

51A JACK AND HIS CART 51A

As he hands Tampon box to Kenny.

JACK
Put this under the celery... okay.

Kenny does.

53 INT. SUPERMARKET - CHECK-OUT COUNTER 53

While Jack waits, the CHECK-OUT LADY starts taking items out of his cart and ringing them up.

CHECK-OUT LADY
Half a pound of Virginia ham.
Half a pound of dry salami... half a pound of swiss cheese...
celery...

Jack's eyes follow her as she reaches for the Tampons and is about to ring it up. Then:

CHECK-OUT LADY
(continuing)
I think they're on special.

JACK
(nervously)
I don't care... really.

CHECK-OUT LADY
Lemme check.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: 53

She grabs the gooseneck mike and speaks into it. Her VOICE BOOMS out all over the store.

CHECK-OUT LADY
(continuing)
Irv... are these Tampon secures on special?

Jack grabs the mike and speaks into it.

JACK
Irv... never mind.

IRV (V.O.)
(over loudspeaker)
Yeah. Nineteen cents off.

We hear a CHILD CRYING (O.S.). Jack turns around, reacts excitedly.

JACK
Kenny? Where's Kenny?

54 OMITTED 54

55 JACK'S POV 55

Someone else's kid, a boy about Kenny's age, is sitting in Jack's basket. He looks up at Jack and cries.

56 JACK 56

In panic, grabs the crying kid from out of his basket.

JACK
Shh! We'll find your mommy.

Jack takes off, leaving Megan behind.

57 ANOTHER ANGLE - SUPERMARKET 57

Jack races down the aisle with the wailing child in his arms SCREAMING Kenny's name. He reaches the end of the aisle, turns and looks back.

58 JACK'S POV OF A SHOPPING CART 58

Going by with Kenny sitting under it.

59 JACK 59

JACK
Kenny! Kenny!!

He runs down the aisle. The little boy is SHRIEKING. As Jack disappears O.S. we hear ANOTHER CRASH!

VOICE
(over loudspeaker)
Irv. Spilled pickles aisle five!

60 CLOSE ON YOUNG WOMAN SHOPPER 60

Slowly pushing her cart down an aisle. She hears the hysterical child and turns to see Jack zeroing in on her.

JACK
Halt!

Jack hands the kid to her.

JACK
(continuing)
Sorry. I'll trade you yours for mine.

Jack bends down and pulls Kenny out from under the other cart and takes off, as:

WOMAN
(yelling to Jack)
I don't have any kids!

61 CHECK-OUT COUNTER 61

Jack marches Kenny up to the cart and puts him back. His eyes widen in horror.

62 CLOSE ON SHOPPING CART BABY SEAT 62

Megan's gone.

63 BACK TO JACK 63

He's terrified.

JACK
(to Check-Out Lady)
Have you seen my baby?

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: 63

CHECK-OUT LADY
Yeah. She's adorable.

JACK
She's gone.

He turns from her to face a BIKER. A gnarled, grungy nightmare-of-a-man. Six-foot, two-hundred-fifty pounds, in stinking leather.

BIKER
You abandoned a baby in a shopping cart? Do you know what kind of emotional damage that causes...?!

Jack is horrified, his wild eyes search the store for some sight of Megan.

64 CEREAL AISLE 64

JOAN HAMPTON has Megan in her arms. She's in her early 30's, pretty, a little worn at the edges, but she still makes it.

We hear ANOTHER CRASH! Moments later, Jack runs past with his cart. Joan sees him go by, laughs and points him out to Megan.

JOAN
There's your daddy.

Jack stop and pulls his cart around. He breathes an enormous sigh of relief. Resting his hands on his knees, he tries to catch his breath. Joan walks over and returns Megan.

JOAN
(continuing)
I'm Joan. Caroline told me you'd be around. Can I give you a hand? I practically live here.

JACK
Give me both of 'em. I don't know what the hell I'm doing.

VOICE
Irv! Broken glass on aisle seven.

JACK
(defensive, yelling)
Irv! We were never on aisle seven! Honest!!

65 EXT. SUPERMARKET - LATER 65

Jack and Joan load groceries into their respective cars parked next to each other.

JOAN
Not so easy, is it?

JACK
I'll say.

JOAN
Might even be the toughest job in the world. It bends your back, drives you nuts and...

She inhales deeply, showing off her body.

JOAN
(continuing)
... makes your boobs droop.

Embarrassed, Jack looks down at his own chest.

A65 NEW ANGLE A65

As Jack closes his trunk lid and moves around to his car door... Joan follows.

JOAN
So don't be ashamed to ask for help.

Jack gets in his car as Joan scribbles something on a torn piece of shopping bag.

JOAN
(continuing)
Mommy training can be real tricky. I can help with sitters, shopping, menus... or if you just want to talk. Here's my number.

She hands Jack the piece of paper as he starts the car.

JACK
(holding paper)
What's this say...?

Joan leans down, showing some cleavage... <u>as Kenny shifts car into reverse</u>.

JOAN
(smiling)
Anytime...

(CONTINUED)

A65 CONTINUED: A65

Jack grins, then makes a macho grab of the steering wheel with one hand as he points ahead with the other.

JACK
(macho)
Well, thanks... Guess I'll be headin' home.

Jack puts his foot on the accelerator and the station wagon abruptly -- SCREECHES BACKWARD!

B65 WIDER ANGLE B65

Of Joan laughing as Jack finally regains control of his car.

Jack sheepishly waves at Joan as he drives away.

65A EXT. PARKING LOT - NEXT AISLE 65A

ANNETTE MARCH, the neighborhood busybody, wheels her cart past Joan.

ANNETTE
(sing-song)
He's married...

JOAN
(sing-song back)
So was I. Once.

ANNETTE
(sing-song)
You're wasting your time.

JOAN
(sing-song)
So are you, Annette.

66 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - EVENING 66

Caroline pulls into the driveway.

67 INT. HOUSE 67

As Caroline enters carrying an armload of file folders. She seems to be pumped up from the day's events.

CAROLINE
Where is everybody?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 67

JACK (O.S.)
Up here.

68 INT. 2ND BEDROOM 68

Kenny, Alex and Megan are all in the tub, filled with bubbles. Jack is trying to give everyone a bath... It's a mess. Kids are using crayon soap pencils on each other.

Caroline enters.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: 68

CAROLINE
(forced cheerful)
Hi, everybody! Mommy's home!

All ad lib "hellos."

JACK
Hi, honey. How was your day?

CAROLINE
Oh, it was... it was...
(starts to cry)
It was terrible. Awful.

JACK
(alarmed)
What happened?

CAROLINE
(through her tears)
People were mean to me, and yelled at me... and I didn't know anything... and there's this secretary who hates me...

Jack tries to stand up, but he seems to be bent over in a permanent stoop... Caroline takes over, making everything look easy.

JACK
(mock tough)
I'll beat 'em all up. Just point them out to me.

Kenny and Alex cheer, "Yeah, Daddy," etc.

CAROLINE
The only one who was even civil was Ron.

JACK
Ron...?!

CAROLINE
Mr. Richardson. Asked me my opinion. And, I tell him exactly how I feel, and he likes it. Can you believe it? I can't believe it. Then they tell me a bunch of us are going to fly to Boston to tour their plant and speak to the client. Is that an unbelievable first day on the job, or what?

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (2) 68

JACK
Unbelievable! How about you, Kenny?

KENNY
I can't believe it.

ALEX
I believe it.

Caroline lifts Kenny out of the tub, revealing that he still has his socks on.

DISSOLVE TO:

69 INT. KITCHEN - LATER 69

Caroline has all the reports spread out on the kitchen table. She is pouring over them, making notes and drinking a cup of coffee. Suddenly, Jack's head appears around the kitchen door. *

JACK *
Feel any better?

CAROLINE *
A little. Thanks for cleaning the kitchen.

JACK
No problem. How much longer you * gonna be?

CAROLINE
I'm almost finished, honest.

JACK
If you don't hurry up, I might be forced to commit an unnatural act with the sandman.

CAROLINE
Don't fall asleep. There's something I want to try with you.

JACK
Is it going to be new and exciting and dangerous and dirty?

CAROLINE
Three of those four.

CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: 69

Jack's jaw drops in anticipation and wonder.

JACK
I'm going up now to annoint myself.

Caroline smiles as Jack exits.

70 OMITTED 70

71 INT. MASTER BEDROOM 71 *

Jack does pushups as he watches a sexy scene from DYNASTY on TV.

He HEARS Caroline coming up the stairs, turns off the TV and turns ON the RADIO, finding a station with sexy MUSIC, then quickly jumps into bed...

We HEAR Caroline's VOICE outside the bedroom door.

CAROLINE (O.S.)
Close your eyes, Jack.

JACK
I'm all yours!

He closes his eyes and smiles. Caroline enters and crosses to the bed. She sits down and TURNS UP the LIGHT. She is carrying a tray with two bowls of tuna salad.

CAROLINE
Now, open your mouth.

JACK
(lecherous)
I like it already.

Jack opens his mouth and Caroline puts in a spoonful of tuna fish. Jack's eyes pop open in surprise and disappointment.

CAROLINE
Chew. This is a taste test.
Tell me which one you prefer:
One...

A very unhappy Jack finishes chewing and swallows. Caroline puts another spoonful into his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: 71

CAROLINE
(continuing)
... or Two...

Jack finishes the second one, and:

JACK
I like the second one.

CAROLINE
Are you sure?

JACK
I am sure. What now?

CAROLINE
Another taste test.

Caroline puts the tray on the floor and gives Jack a very sweet kiss. They break.

JACK
I don't know, I still like number Two.

Caroline attacks him, kissing him much more fervently, as we --

DISSOLVE TO:

72 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - MORNING 72

A black limousine slides up to the curb.

73 REVERSE ANGLE 73

ON front window of Butler house. A slat of Venetian blind is opened and a pair of eyes is visible.

74 INT. BUTLER HOUSE 74

The pair of eyes belong to Alex. He is looking out of the window.

ALEX
Somebody musta died.

Jack enters wearing his "tiger suit" camouflage pajamas.

JACK
Why?

74 CONTINUED: 74

Alex turns from the window.

ALEX
There's a limousine out front.

JACK
No kidding.
(calls to Caroline in the kitchen)
How come you didn't say anything about a limousine last night?

Caroline enters on her way up stairs...

CAROLINE
All they told me was that they were sending a car. Tell 'em I'll be right there.

She exits as Jack goes over to Alex and looks out the window himself.

74A JACK'S POV 74A

Of a nattily dressed Richardson approaching front door.

74B CLOSE ON JACK 74B

As he looks down at himself in panic.

JACK
(to himself)
Dammit!

He dashes out of the room. A moment later, there's a KNOCK at the front door.

75 INT. FOYER 75

Alex opens the door. Ron Richardson enters.

RICHARDSON
Hi. Would you please tell your Mommy that Mr. Richardson is here?

ALEX
Stay right here. I'm not supposed to let strangers in the house.

Alex starts up the stairs.

75A INT. TOOL SHED - DAY 75A

Jack frantically searches through his tool boxes.

75B INT. FOYER - DAY 75B

Richardson stands awkwardly as we hear a CHAIN-SAW COMING CLOSER. Jack enters the front door wearing overalls over his pajamas, a painter's hat, and goggles. He carries a chain-saw. Jack casually strolls in and stops when he sees Richardson... he turns off the saw and pushes up his goggles.

JACK
Hey, you must be Ron Richardson. Jack Butler. Put 'er there.

Jack sticks out his hand. They shake. Jack squeezes Richardson's hand until we can read the pain in his eyes.

RICHARDSON
Nice to meet you. Just waiting for Caroline.

JACK
You know women.
(winks)
Get you a beer?

RICHARDSON
It's eight-thirty in the morning.

JACK
Right. Whiskey? Scotch?

Richardson reacts. Alex wanders back into the room about now and listens intently.

JACK
(continuing; off-handedly)
Just taking advantage of some time off to build a new wing onto the house. Rip out some walls. Do some re-wiring.

RICHARD
Gonna go two-twenty?

JACK
Two-twenty... two-twenty-one...

(CONTINUED)

75B CONTINUED: 75B

RICHARDSON
You sound like a pretty handy guy.

JACK
(modest)
Oh, yeah. I do a little bit of everything. Sculpt... paint... write a little poetry...

Caroline coughs slightly at this. She has come into the room and caught the tail-end of what Jack has been saying.

CAROLINE
Hi, Ron.

RICHARDSON
Hi. Don't you look nice.

CAROLINE
Thanks. Sorry to keep you waiting.

RICHARDSON
No problem. Just having a little chat with Jack. Quite a guy.

CAROLINE
Don't I know.

RICHARDSON
We'd better get going. Nice meeting you, Jack.

Jack holds out his hand. Richardson goes for it, remembers the previous bone-crusher, and slaps Jack on the shoulder instead.

JACK
Hey, it was my pleasure. Take care of my little woman now.

Richardson exits, with Caroline right behind him.

CAROLINE
(sotto to Jack)
You're a jerk, but I love you... nice outfit.

She kisses his cheek and exits.

A76 EXT. PORCH - DAY A76

Jack leans out the door and waves goodbye.

A76 CONTINUED: A76

JACK
If I'm not home when you call, honey, try me at the gym or the gun club.

As ENGINE STARTS and a car pulls away. Jack waves a final time. He slams the door.

76 EXT. SKY - PRIVATE JET - DAY (STOCK) 76

A sleek private jet moves across through the clouds.

77 INT. PRIVATE JET - IN FLIGHT. 77

Caroline, Richardson and three executives from the conference room are having a two-martini lunch at 30,000 feet. Richardson's on his third, and Caroline is drinking coffee.

RICHARDSON
Humphrey's tough... the toughest client we've got... But, just remember, Caroline, you've got two things going for you.

A Steward clears away the appetizers.

RICHARDSON
(continuing)
Your experience as a homemaker, fresh from the trenches of consumerism and the implicit wisdom that this connotes... and of course, your body.

The executives turn at the word "body," and roll their eyes at each other.

CAROLINE
(flat)
I thank you... my husband thanks you.

Caroline looks out the window.

RICHARDSON
(expansive)
Hey, I'm just saying it's an asset... a great asset.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

RICHARDSON (CONT'D)
I mean, Humphrey's a man, you're a woman... we have a saying in the ad game... whatever it takes.

The Steward serves the entree... filet mignon.

CAROLINE
Well, I certainly want to help make the sale, but...

RICHARDSON
Because you're an executive, right?

Richardson looks down and watches Caroline nervously cutting his steak into little bite-sized pieces.

CAROLINE
Right.

RICHARDSON
Now that we both know that you're an executive... you can stop cutting my steak.

Caroline puts the knife down, embarrassed again. There is a beat.

CAROLINE
Alright, but eat your vegetables.

78 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - EARLY AFTERNOON 78

Jack's station wagon turns the corner and pulls into the driveway. Jack and the kids alight from the car.

ALEX
Dad, remember, today's housecleaning day.

JACK
(mimicking Alex)
Dad, today's housecleaning day.
(pause)
What's the big deal? It's not like splitting the atom. Alex, why don't you go over to Joey's house and play?

ALEX
I hate Joey. He smells.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: 78

JACK
Okay, okay. Stick around and give me a hand if you really want to.

They enter the house.

KENNY
Oh, boy. Mommy never lets us help!

79 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - EARLY AFTERNOON 79

Alex strips the sheets off the bed, stuffing them into a pillow case.

79 CONTINUED: 79 *

Kenny is also stuffing things into the pillow case... an alarm clock, a pair of Caroline's slippers, and whatever else he finds on the bedside table. Jack enters from the master bathroom, arms full of dirty laundry.

80 INT. BASEMENT LAUNDRY ROOM - LATER 80

Jack and the boys are knee-deep in dirty clothes, stuffing more into the washing machine...

JACK
(reading dials)
... cold water, hot water, permanent press, delicate...

ALEX
Dad.

JACK
Yo!

Jack reads the directions on a Tide box and pours in a cup.

ALEX
Can we fix lunch?

JACK
Okay, anything but tuna!

As Alex and Kenny run up the stairs, Jack picks up a bottle of liquid detergent. He pours in a cup. He drops in a couple of fabric softener sheets and SLAMS the lid closed.

JACK
(continuing; to himself)
That wasn't any major problem.

He starts for the stairs. The WASHER lets out a pained GROAN. An almost-human cry for help.

81 INT. KITCHEN 81

Jack hurries up the stairs from the basement as he HEARS the front door KNOCKER BANG.

He rushes through, not noticing Alex and Kenny pouring chili into a brownie pan. They put the pan into the oven and turn up the heat.

82 INT. FOYER 82

Jack opens the door revealing a woman TV repair person, DORIS.

DORIS
Butler? You having a problem with your horizontal hold?

JACK
If you say so.

83 INT. LIVING ROOM 83

As Jack leads Doris toward the family room TV. He stops in his tracks.

84 JACK'S POV OF MEGAN 84

In her walker, playing in the potted plants... Soil's everywhere. She looks up at him with a face black with dirt, and grins.

JACK
Megan! Alex!!

Jack points Doris to the family room, grabs a plant out of Megan's hand and starts to put the soil back. Megan grabs Jack's keys off the coffee table and throws them on the rug. Jack does not see this.

DORIS (O.S.) *
Mr. Butler, can you come here a minute?

JACK *
I'm busy!

He starts throwing soil back into a pot. *

DORIS (O.S.) *
I get forty-five dollars an hour.

JACK *
(to Megan)
Stay there.

He rushes out of the room. *

A85 INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER A85 *

Jack, Alex and Kenny enter.

(CONTINUED)

A85 CONTINUED: A85 *

JACK
Okay, where does your Mommy keep the vacuum cleaner?

KENNY
You mean "Jaws?"

JACK
(snickers)
Mommy calls the vacuum cleaner "Jaws?"

ALEX
Don't laugh, Dad. "Jaws" is bad!

Kenny nods agreement, then points ominously upstairs.

85 INT. UPSTAIRS LANDING - OUTSIDE CLOSET 85

Alex, Kenny and Megan hide behind Jack as he opens the door.

86 JACK'S POV

MUSIC: OMINOUS VACUUM CLEANER THEME. It is a mother!

"Jaws" is a large, gleaming chrome, self-propelled, state-of-the-art vacuum cleaner. One could swear it was alive.

JACK
Now, this is my kind of machine. *
(to boys)
Go in the kitchen and play... and take your sister with you.

The kids go off as Jack picks up "Jaws."

87 INT. LIVING ROOM 87

Jack turns on "Jaws." The SOUND is awesome. It starts off, pulling Jack behind. After a beat, Jack regains control.

88 LOW ANGLE 88

The vacuum cleaner heads across the rug right for Jack's set of keys.

89 ANOTHER ANGLE 89

As Jack vacuums. Abruptly, there's a CRUNCH! "Jaws" has just eaten Jack's keys. He hits the switch, the machine won't go off. Suddenly, the PHONE RINGS.

Jack, holding "Jaws," answers.

JACK
(into phone)
Jack Butler and Asscciates.

90 INT. PRIVATE JET - IN FLIGHT 90

Richardson tells his Executives a joke as Caroline talks on the phone.

CAROLINE
(into phone)
Hi, Sweetheart. What's all that noise? *

The "yes" men roar with laughter at Richardson's joke, of course.

JACK (V.O.)
(filtered)
Nothing. Where are you calling from, a bar? *

91 INT. LIVING ROOM 91

Jack is holding the pulsating "Jaws" in a death grip.

CAROLINE (V.O.)
(filtered)
I'm calling from 30,000 feet, in a private jet, Jack. It's incredible.

JACK
(sarcastic)
I'm thrilled for you.

Doris appears in the doorway.

DORIS
You want to come in and check this TV, so I can get going?

Jack nods as the front door KNOCKER BANGS and the back door BUZZER SOUNDS.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: 91

ALEX (O.S.)
(from kitchen)
I'll get it, Dad!

JACK
(into phone)
Honey, let me call you back.

He hangs up, looks for a place to plant "Jaws," finally puts it against the wall.

JACK
Stay! *

92 INT. KITCHEN 92

Alex opens the back door. PHIL, in a Gas Company uniform, stands waiting.

PHIL
I'm here to adjust the pilot on your water heater.

ALEX
Okay by me.

Alex points Phil downstairs. The oven TIMER BUZZES. *

PHIL
(sniffing)
'Zat chili? Smells good.

93 INT. FOYER 93

Jack reaches the front door as the oven TIMER BUZZES AGAIN.

JACK
Shit!

He opens the front door. It's the PEST CONTROL MAN.

PEST CONTROL MAN
Monthly service.

JACK
Jeeze, been a month already?!

94 INT. KITCHEN 94

Jack runs in, opens the oven door... smoke billows out.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED: 94

JACK
(closing door)
Alex!!!

Jack races out the back door past Kenny. Doris and the Pest Control Man exchange looks.

DORIS
She musta married him for his money.

Megan waddles over to the trashcan in her walker.

95 INT. BASEMENT LAUNDRY ROOM 95

The washer is gyrating wildly. The door of the washer is open and sudsy clothes are being spit out like a machine gun... pinning Phil against the wall. *

96 INT. KITCHEN 96

Jack rushes in with a fire extinguisher. He opens the oven door and douses the fire. As the smoke clears... the SMOKE DETECTOR GOES OFF. Jack looks up angrily.

JACK
Step back!

Everybody does. Jack squirts the smoke detector, as Megan grabs a chili can and sticks her fist in it. She takes a mouthful... likes it, digs in for another can.

97 INT. LIVING ROOM 97

Jack enters, flustered, face blackened with smoke. "Jaws" has already done a good deal of damage and is nowhere in sight.

JACK
(suddenly shouting)
Kenny! Run for your life...!

98 JACK'S POV OF KENNY 98

Running from the other room, pursued by "Jaws." Kenny runs into the foyer and up the stairs. Then suddenly, Kenny SCREAMS.

99 INT. FOYER 99

Jack rushes in and sees that Kenny's safe... But, "Jaws" has his "woobie." Kenny SCREAMS. Jack tries to pull "woobie" away from "Jaws"... He's losing.

Jack hits a switch. A beat, then out spews the "woobie," the car keys, dirt, dust and hair. Jack unplugs the vacuum as he disappears into a cloud of filth.

Phil, Doris, the Pest Control Man and Alex have entered during Jack's final battle with "Jaws." In horror, they watch Megan tool in in her walker... still holding onto the chili can. *

DORIS
(to Jack)
Are you crazy? You fed a baby chili?!

100 CLOSE ON MEGAN 100

She drops the chili can and BELCHES.

101 SERIES OF QUICK CUTS 101

Of everyone in the room reacting.

102 CLOSE ON CHILI CAN 102

As it rolls across the floor... Megan BELCHES AGAIN!

103 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - HIGH ANGLE - DAY 103

As Doris, Phil, Pest Control Man all bolt from the house, jump into their respective vehicles and SCREECH away.

104 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - A LITTLE LATER 104

Alex and Kenny stare up at Jack. He's wearing an apron, rubber cleaning gloves, a swimmer's nose plug and a hand towel tied over his mouth.

He holds his hands up like a surgeon. Under one arm is a roll of paper towels, under the other, a green plastic garbage bag. Stuck in his belt is a can of air freshener and a pair of spaghetti tongs. He walks with Frankenstein-like steps.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: 104

JACK
(to boys)
Where does Mommy hide the extra diapers?

105 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - NIGHT 105

The limousine pulls up to the crub and Caroline emerges.

106 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT 106

Caroline enters the darkened room. Her eyes adjust to the LIGHT from the TV late movie, then she smiles as she looks fondly at an exhausted Jack and the boys .. asleep on the couch. *

CAROLINE
(softly)
Sorry, I'm late.

Jack and the boys open their eyes halfway. *

CAROLINE *
(continuing;
sweetly)
Did everybody have a good day?

Jack and the boys just look at her. *

107 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - ANOTHER DAY 107

Jack is in a suit and tie. He's talking to a teenage babysitter, DEBBIE. She's holding Megan. Kenny and Alex are on the floor playing.

JACK
No phone calls, no visitors. These kids are your responsibility now.

DEBBIE
Totally okay, Mr. Butler. I've babysat these kids before. *

Jack picks up his briefcase, kisses the kids goodbye and exits.

Debbie waits a beat, then sets Megan in her walker.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED: 107

DEBBIE
(continuing;
to Megan)
Don't piss me off, okay?

She sits down and pulls her cigarettes out of her jeans and lights up. The front door opens. Debbie panics and shoots the cigarette across the room... holding her breath as Jack sticks his head in the room.

JACK
And, no smoking!

108 INT. EMPLOYMENT AGENCY - RECEPTION ROOM 108

Jack waits with about a dozen hapless, unemployed white-collar workers. Two unemployed men, HIGGINS and DOUGLASS, talk next to Jack.

DOUGLASS
Does your wife like seafood?

HIGGINS
Yeah, but seafood smells up the kitchen. Takes me hours to get rid of the odor.
(beat; then)
You got something simple?

DOUGLASS
I got a hamburger Wellington that's out of this world.

Jack's not interested, but Higgins and several other men open their briefcases, take out pens and resumes.

HIGGINS
Great, let me have it.

DOUGLASS
Start with two pounds of beef, lean and mean... brown it in butter.

The men write on the back of their resumes... Another MAN exits from the inner office into the reception area.

RECEPTIONIST
Higgins. You're next.

Higgins stops writing, looks at Jack.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: 108

HIGGINS
Go ahead, Butler... I'll go after you.

JACK
You were ahead of me.

HIGGINS
Hey, there ain't a job available in this whole city... besides, I got no place to go. Go ahead.

Jack hesitates.

DOUGLASS
... drain off the excess fat...

RECEPTIONIST
Okay, Butler, I guess you're next.

Jack rises, walks to inner office door, turns:

JACK
(to Higgins)
Hey, if you've got an extra copy of that receipt, I'd appreciate it.

Higgins nods; Jack enters inner office.

109 EXT. CITY PARK - DAY 109

Jack sits, discouraged, on one of the park benches. He absentmindedly throws some peanuts to the pigeons fluttering at his feet.

JACK
I'll bet you guys have seen your share of down an' out guys.
(beat, then)
Level with me. How far down am I...?

Just then a BUM sits down next to Jack, he studies the peanuts in Jack's hand. The pigeons flutter and fly OUT OF THE SHOT, as Jack gives Bum his peanuts and exits. *

110 OMITTED 110

110A EXT. STREET - UPPERCLASS SUBURB OF DETROIT - DAY 110A

The Butler station wagon winds its way by with Jack, Caroline and the kids inside.

110B INT. STATION WAGON - MOVING 110B

Jack silently drives as Caroline studies his face for a moment, then:

CAROLINE
You're angry. Aren't you?

JACK
Me? No. Why?

CAROLINE
'Cause I can tell when you're angry and you seem angry.

JACK
You're wrong. I'm not angry. It's just not where I wanna be right now.

CAROLINE
Jack, I can't not go. Please, do it for me... I did it for you.
(beat, then)
We'll only stay ten minutes.

JACK
Ten minutes?

CAROLINE
Fifteen tops.

JACK
Fair enough. Anymore an' we do the ol' Aunt Emily.

Caroline nods and smiles.

111 EXT. RICHARDSON'S HOME - DAY 111

One of those imposing Tudor-style beauties one would find in Grosse Point, Michigan. There are several cars lined up in the driveway, waiting to be parked, when the Butler station wagon arrives.

112 INT. CAR 112

ALEX
Wow, what a house!

JACK
Probably mortgaged to the eyeballs.

CAROLINE
Not this one. Ron's great grandfather Commander Richardson built it.

JACK
Oh, a hand-me-down.

Caroline looks indulgently at Jack as he stops the car.

113 EXT. RICHARDSON HOUSE - DAY 113

As Jack alights from the car, he is handed a parking ticket.

ATTENDANT (O.S.)
Your parking ticket, sir.

Jack reacts at the SOUND of the VOICE.

JACK
Stan...

114 WIDER ANGLE 114

Revealing that the parking attendant is Stan Noble.

STAN
As you can see, I'm still in cars, Jack.

Held up moment between the two friends, then:

JACK
Haven't heard from Larry, have you?

STAN
No... How you doing?

JACK
Lots of irons in the fire, pal.

As Stan gets in the car, gestures at the opulence.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: 114

STAN
I can see that. Catch you later, buddy.

115 EXT. GROUNDS OF RICHARDSON'S ESTATE - DAY 115

The Richardson/Frankel Company picnic is in full swing. Richardson has spared no expense. Besides, it's a write-off.

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED: 115

The manicured lawn is tastefully decorated with booths for food, and several uniformed staff circulate through the large crowd with drinks and hors d'oeuvres.

Jack nervously loosens his tie in an attempt to be casual, as Richardson, in slacks and blazer, and Eve in Ralph Lauren casual, approach.

CAROLINE
(to Jack)
There's Ron.

RICHARDSON
Hello, Caroline. Hi there...

CAROLINE
(quickly)
You remember my husband, Jack.

RICHARDSON
Sure. How you doin', Jack?

The two men shake hands. Eve nods "hello" to Caroline. She sizes up Jack and smiles at him.

EVE
(to Caroline)
How come we never hear about <u>him</u> at the office?

Jack looks a little hurt. Caroline looks confused.

RICHARDSON
You must be pretty darn proud of our Caroline.

Richardson hugs Caroline. Jack virtually wrests her from his grasp and hugs Caroline himself.

JACK
You bet we are. I am. The kids are. We're all proud of her at home.

RICHARDSON
Well, she deserved that promotion.

Jack looks quizzically at Caroline.

CAROLINE
Just a little promotion, Jack. No big deal.

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED: (2) 115

Jack and Caroline share a "we'll talk later" look.

JACK
As I said, we're all real proud of her... Hey, listen, we gotta get going to see Caroline's Aunt Emily.

CAROLINE
She's sick.

JACK
Dying.

ALEX
Dead.

Jack claps a fatherly hand on Alex's shoulder to shut him up.

RICHARDSON
Sorry to hear it. Especially since I was counting on you to join our corporate olympics, Butler.

Richardson nods over in another direction and they all follow his look.

116 THEIR POV OF CORPORATE OLYMPICS 116

Event booths, running lanes, obstacle course, etc. Several contestants line up along the sidelines.

RICHARDSON
(continuing)
Sure could use some new blood.

117 BACK TO SCENE 117

JACK
I'm not really dressed for it...

RICHARDSON
Then you can at least stay for a few minutes and watch with the other wives... uh, families.

Caroline restrains Alex and Kenny, who are starting to wander off, as Jack considers for a beat. Then...

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: 117

JACK
You got an extra pair of shoes?

Caroline shoots Jack a look.

118 EXT. WARM-UP AREA 118

Jack is pumping up as Alex pins a number on Jack's track jersey.

CAROLINE
Jack, there's something you oughta know.

JACK
What are you afraid of, think I'm going to beat the pants off your boss? He should've thought of that before he challenged me.

CAROLINE
Jack, he merely asked...

JACK
I know a challenge when I hear one... "new blood!"

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE
(over loudspeaker)
Will all the contestants for the Richardson/Frankel Annual Corporate Olympics please report to the starting line.

JACK
Give me a kiss for luck.

Caroline and the boys kiss Jack. He kisses Megan and runs off...

A119 EXT. ANOTHER PART OF WARM-UP AREA A119

Richardson, now in expensive jogging suit, talks with three other CONTESTANTS, (executives). *

RICHARDSON
Looks like we'll get some real competition this year. Butler here's a karate expert...

CONTESTANT
That's all we need.

The three Contestants exchange a look. *

119 EXT. OBSTACLE COURSE STARTING LINE 119

Richardson takes off his sweatsuit and hands it to Eve as Jack runs up to join the six other CONTESTANTS.

Jack does some deep knee bends, then touches his toes. The other Contestants watch.

CONTESTANT #1
Relax, Butler, you're not going to win anyway.

JACK
Richardson <u>that</u> good...?

CONTESTANT #2
He's the boss, it's his tournament. <u>Get it</u>?

JACK
Oh, yeah... I get it.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: 119

Richardson comes trotting up to the line.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE
(over loudspeaker)
Entrants for the five-martini marathon, take your positions.

Jack looks at the course before him. After the 50-yard-dash, there's a table with 4 martinis on it, followed by various obstacles, ended by a table with a single martini on it.

Everyone else at the picnic clusters around the course, cheering. The starter raises his gun and FIRES. They're off!

120 LONG SHOT 120

As the runners APPROACH CAMERA. CAMERA is OVERCRANKED, and the SOUND of their FOOTFALLS and BREATHING is EXAGGERATED. Jack and Richardson are giving it their all.

121 WIDER ANGLE 121

Two Contestants try to sandwich Jack between them. He is jostled a bit, but manages to stay clear...

122 FIRST MARTINI TABLE 122

Richardson and Jack reach there about the same time. Richardson downs the 4 martinis in a thrice. He's good at it. He takes off for the wall. Jack is having trouble finishing the 4 martinis quickly. He finally does.

123 CROWD 123

Cheering for Richardson. Eve's overjoyed at this turn of events. She shoots a look at Caroline... who seems at a loss as to what she should do. Alex, Kenny and Megan all cheer for Jack.

124 BACK TO RACE 124

as Jack weaves his way around the table and heads for the wall. Richardson's having trouble getting over.

125 JACK'S POV 125

It's HAZY. There seems to be two ropes dangling from the wall.

126 THE WALL 126

As Jack literally hits it. He gets up and grabs the rope... only to be body blocked by a heavy-set Contestant and knocked down again. Finally, Jack hoists himself over... hitting the ground seconds after Richardson.

127 THE CROWD

Going wild. The agency employees are cheering reluctantly for Richardson. Alex, Kenny, Megan and Caroline are cheering for Jack. Eve scowls at them angrily.

128 LOW ANGLE - SHOOTING THROUGH THE PIPES 128

At Richardson and Jack crawling. Richardson is in the lead. He emerges, with Jack right on his heels.

129 TIRE RUN 129

Jack negotiates the tires pretty well, but Richardson ends up sprawled on his belly. One of the other Contestants tries to help Richardson up, he waves him off...

130 MONKEY BARS 130

There is only one set. Jack makes it over two rungs then falls off. Now, it's Richardson's turn. Amazingly, he picks his way agilely across the bars...

131 WATER TROUGH 131

Richardson tries to leap across and lands right in the middle! Jack makes the leap, as Richardson runs up the other side and out.

132 THE CROWD 132

Still going wild. Eve's face is etched with concern. She approaches Caroline and the kids.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: 132

EVE
What's he doing?

CAROLINE
(grins)
I think he's winning!

Alex and Kenny cheer!

133 THE HURDLES 133

Both Jack and Richardson succeed in stumbling over all three hurdles. But, Jack arrives at the last obstacle, the fifth martini, a beat ahead of Richardson.

As Jack reaches for the martini, his eyes search the crowd triumphantly for Caroline.

134 CAROLINE 134

Her eyes meet Jack's. Held up moment between them, then:

135 JACK 135

Raises the glass to his lips... But, before he can take a sip, Jack staggers, trips and falls to the ground... * dropping the martini.

136 RICHARDSON 136

Reaches the table and downs his fifth martini.

137 WIDER ANGLE 137

As Eve and several agency Executives hoist the victorious Richardson on their shoulders.

ANNOUNCER
(over loudspeaker)
Winner and still champion, Ron Richardson!

138 ANGLE ON THE BUTLERS 138

As they rush to the fallen Jack.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED: 138

CAROLINE
(looking down)
I owe you one, Jack.

Jack pops one eye open. Alex and Kenny "help" him to his feet.

JACK
(brushing himself off)
Sure, sure, that's the least a wife can do for his husband.

Jack puts his arms around the boys and walks off... Caroline knows he's hiding the hurt.

139 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - MORNING 139

Sometime later. The weather is turning cold. It is a typical busy morning on the block.

Caroline Butler emerges from the house. She is dressed in a fabulous new outfit. As she approaches her car, her next door neighbor (BOB) also emerges from his house. They exchange good mornings, then: *

BOB
How 'bout those Lions, huh?

CAROLINE
Thank God for Billy Sims.

Bob waves goodbye and gets into his car, as Caroline opens her car door. But, before she gets in, she turns and looks back to the house and waves at the upstairs window.

140 UPSTAIRS WINDOW 140

Revealing the face of a newly bearded Jack Butler.

141 INT. MASTER BEDROOM 141

Jack is standing at the window dressed in a ratty robe. His hands are pressed against the glass, and he is staring blankly at the wonderful world outside as it passes him by. He raises his hand as if to wave to Caroline. Instead, he wipes the window with a paper towel.

141A INT. BUTLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING 141A *

Jack, wearing a frumpled, untucked flannel shirt, wrinkled jeans and slippers, feather-dusts the coffee table. His eyes stop on the family album.

He sits and slowly leafs through the pages... watching the recorded events of his life pass by.

141B CLOSE ON ALBUM 141B *

As the flipping pages reveal Jack and Caroline's younger years... their wedding... the kids' baby pictures... etc.

142 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - AFTERNOON 142 *

It's littered with a large pile of dirty laundry and linens. We hear VOICES:

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
... don't... don't leave. Kiss me again, please. Please, kiss me once more.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
You know where that's going to lead to, don't you...?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
I know, I want it to lead there. I want to feel alive again...

MUSIC: STING.

Jack walks out of the bedroom with a portable TV and a mop bucket and starts to cross the hall.

JACK
(to TV)
Don't listen to her, Victor. She's a tramp. She's already buried one husband.

143 INT. BOYS' BEDROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER 143

Jack's in the same flannel shirt, but his beard is now longer. Hardly taking his eyes off his soap, he sets the TV down and rakes the toys that are on the floor under the bed.

(CONTINUED)

143 CONTINUED: 143 *

VICTOR (O.S.)
(on TV)
So, I'm not the father of the child. Well, that's some consolation. Just who is the culprit?

NIKKI (O.S.)
(on TV)
You don't want to know.

VICTOR (O.S.)
(on TV)
Well, let me guess. Probably the deceased Mr. Cashman.

Jack is incredulous.

JACK
(to TV)
You're wrong, Victor! Open your eyes! Nikki doesn't love you... she's been boffing your friend Kevin.

Jack reaches into the mop bucket and retrieves a cold beer out of the ice. He pops it open and drinks.

VICTOR
(on TV)
You mean Kevin Bancroft.

JACK
(to TV)
Right. Now watch, she'll blame you.

NIKKI
(on TV)
You threw me at him, you let him know it was perfectly fine for him to take me to San Francisco. Only he took me to bed first and it's your fault.

JACK
See, I told you...

144 INT. BASEMENT - SEVERAL DAYS LATER 144 *

The portable TV is running Jack's soap again.

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED: 144 *

KEVIN
(on TV)
Go on, Nikki. Tell me why I should divorce you.

NIKKI
(on TV)
For denying you your marital rights...

The washing machine lid is open and Jack stands ten feet back wadding up a pair of underpants. He's still in that flannel shirt, but his beard is a little longer. During the following, Jack does elaborate wind-up routine, including crotch check.

JACK
Butler's on the mound. He's loose and confident.
(lowering his voice)
He checks the runners...

Jack winds up and pitches the underpants... They sail into the washer. Jack shakes a triumphant fist.

JACK
(continuing)
It's a strike! Butler has retired the side. It looks like he's going to go upstairs and make lunch for his children.

Jack starts up the stairs.

JACK
(continuing)
My guess is he'll be making hot dogs the form and soup for himself. What's your comment on that, Al?
(another voice)
Good idea, Bob.
(as Bob)
Thanks, Al.

145 INT. KITCHEN - DAYS LATER 145

The beard is looking better, but the flannel shirt is not. Jack's got his soap on again. An ironing board is set up in the kitchen. Jack watches the soaps as he pours nearly a half a bottle of popcorn kernels into an electric popcorn maker. Alex starts to warn him, but thinks better of it. Jack goes back to his ironing.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: 145

Alex and Kenny sit at the table looking at their grilled cheese sandwiches.

ALEX
Dad? These are cold, and the cheese isn't hardly melted down.

Jack doesn't miss a beat. He reaches down with the hot iron... pressing it on Alex's sandwich. It SIZZLES and STEAMS. Jack does the same for Kenny's. The popcorn starts POPPING.

146 CLOSE ON MICROWAVE OVEN 146

The BUZZER GOES OFF. Jack opens the door and takes out a load of baby socks.

147 BACK TO KITCHEN 147

Kenny holds his "woobie" up to Jack.

KENNY
Daddy! Daddy, my "woobie's" ripped!

JACK
Kenny, why don't you get rid of that blanket?

KENNY
(screaming)
No... no...

JACK
(holding his ears)
All right... All right!

Jack rummages through the utility drawer, finds what he's looking for, kneels down and staples Kenny's "woobie."

JACK
(continuing)
There you go. Now, I'd appreciate it if you guys would keep it down for a couple minutes. Nikki gets the results of the blood tests today. * *

Jack turns the channel and fine-tunes the picture as his soap starts.

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED: 147

ALEX
(watching)
Is it Kevin's baby? *

JACK
We'll find out.

ALEX
Kevin's a skunk. *

JACK
But he gets all the girls.

ALEX
He sure got Nikki. *

SOUND: PHONE RINGS. Jack answers it.

JACK
(into phone)
Hey, how you doing, Joan... I think it's Kevin's... Victor? * It can't be Victor. He's had a vasectomy... it didn't take?? You sure?

The popcorn is coming fast and furiously. The popper is overloaded.

ALEX
Dad, the popcorn.

JACK
(into phone)
You and who else?... Sure, bring them over here. See you.

At this point, the popper starts firing popcorn. The overloaded popper is jumping all over the counter, firing buttered popcorn all over the room.

Jack grabs a pan lid and a skillet... brandishing them a la Errol Flynn. He then proceeds to beat the popcorn maker into an impotent pulp.

148 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - DUSK 148

There are several cars parked in front of the house.

ANNETTE (V.O.)
I'll see your free giant Tide and raise you two Folgers' dollar offs.

149 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - SAME TIME 149

There's a poker game going on in Jack's kitchen. Jack, Joan, Annette and a couple of other neighbor ladies are playing for coupons. Jack's brought poker to the coffee klatch. Everybody but Annette and Joan folds.

JOAN
(flirting)
This is so much more fun than bridge, Jack. I'm glad you thought of it!

ANNETTE
(interrupting)
Are you going to play cards, or flap your gums?

JOAN
I'll see those Folgers and raise you...
(with great drama)
... a fifty-cent Bounce, a two-dollar John's Pizza rebate and a two-for-one Sun Pure Frozen Entree. *

ANNETTE
Have you tried those Sun Pure Entrees? *
(makes a face)
My dog won't eat 'em. But, I'm calling you with a sixty-cent, new, improved Ban Roll-On and a free introductory, triple-ply Hefty bag offer. Whattaya got?

Joan shows Jack her hand, and:

JOAN
(too innocently)
Are these any good?

She holds her cards for Jack to see.

150 JACK'S POV 150

The cards are being held in front of Joan's chest. Since a couple of her blouse buttons are open, Jack can not only see her cards, but a great deal of her cleavage.

151 BACK TO SCENE 151

JACK
Two pair... plenty.

Jack's eyes meet Joan's. They hold for a long beat.

152 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - NIGHT 152

Caroline pulls into the driveway, parks, gets out of the car... somewhat surprised by all the other cars.

153 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 153

Caroline enters from the back door. She holds her briefcase and some file folders and watches Alex, Kenny and three other KIDS seated at the kitchen table, eating pizza out of a cardboard carton. They're watching TV. *

ALEX & KENNY
Mommy, Mommy.

154 INT. FAMILY ROOM 154

Caroline enters and says "hello" to everyone rather coolly.

JACK *
(guiltily)
Hi, honey. Is it that late already?

JOAN
We were just finishing, Caroline.

CAROLINE
Don't be silly. Sit down, sit down. I've got a lot of work to do anyhow. I've got a big presentation to prepare for.

As Caroline backs out of the family room, Annette indicates that they should all get going. Jack avoids eye contact with Caroline.

155 CLOSE ON TRAY 155

Which contains a glass of wine, a bud vase with a single wilted flower in it, and a plate containing a couple pieces of warmed-up pizza.

156 ANOTHER ANGLE 156

Revealing that the tray is being carried up the stairs by Jack, who has donned a tuxedo jacket. The rest of his clothing remains the same. Jack reaches the bedroom door and KNOCKS.

JACK
Room service, Mrs. Butler.

Jack opens the door and enters.

157 INT. MASTER BEDROOM 157

Caroline is already in her nightgown. She has her work spread out all over the bed, and is making notes on a yellow pad. She looks up as Jack enters and places the tray on the bed.

CAROLINE
(coolly)
Thanks, Jack, but Ron dumped the Schooner Tuna presentation on me and I'm way behind.

JACK
You gotta eat something.

CAROLINE
If I felt like eating I would have gone down and made something for myself that I really wanted to eat. Okay?

JACK
All right, I think we should get right into this. Lemme give you a hand here. The house is a mess, the kids are a mess, I'm a mess. Did I leave anything out?

CAROLINE
No, that'll about do it. Jack, take a look at yourself, you've thrown in the towel.

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED: 157

JACK
What got to you... the beard? Caroline, don't let the beard throw you. It's in the transitional stage. When it fills in, I'm gonna look great. Like the movie star... ah... whatshisname...

CAROLINE
Orson Welles?

JACK
(snapping fingers)
Fat jokes, right? What's next?

CAROLINE
Is the shirt open for discussion?

JACK
Sure.

CAROLINE
You've been wearing that shirt for the last two weeks straight. It should be retired and sent to the Dry Cleaning Hall of Fame.

Jack is steamed. As he listens, he is shaking his head "yes."

CAROLINE
(continuing; consoling)
Look, Jack, I know what you're going through. I've been there.

JACK
You have?

CAROLINE *
For eight years, it was Mrs. Butler this and Mrs. Butler that. I never even had a first name.

JACK *
Well, if you were so unhappy, why didn't you tell me before?

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED: (2)

CAROLINE *
Because I wasn't unhappy. I was frustrated. I was confused. But, what saw me through was pride. I took pride in this house. I took pride in the kids, and I took pride in being Mrs. Jack Butler.

JACK *
Maybe that's because you didn't know any better. All I know is my brain has turned to oatmeal. I yelled at Kenny this morning because he was coloring outside the lines. Megan and I are starting to like the same TV shows.

As he talks, Jack starts gathering a couple of pillows, a blanket and his pajamas.

CAROLINE
What are you doing? Where are you going?

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED: (3) 157

Jack starts moving around like a fat man.

JACK
I'm just gonna get out of here so you have more room to walk, because I'm taking up so-o-o much room, because you got a lot of work to do.

As Jack moves toward the door in exaggerated "fat" movements:

JACK
(continuing)
And I got nothing to do except eat pizza and ice cream all day. I'll just sleep downstairs on the "fat" couch.

He has reached the doorway. He turns to go out sideways.

JACK
(continuing)
Gotta get this doorway enlarged.

And he's gone.

158 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - MORNING 158

CAMERA GOES OFF the children playing in the backyard and STARTS ROVING THROUGH the unkempt house SEARCHING for Jack. The classic "Now Voyager" THEME GROWS LOUDER.

CAMERA finally FINDS Jack sitting on the couch in the family room. A beer and a piece of pizza in each hand, he seems mesmerized by the TV.

159 CLOSE ON TV 159

As Paul Henreid lights two cigarettes for Bette Davis...

160 BACK TO JACK 160

As the PHONE RINGS. He answers:

JACK
'Mornin', Joan. Hey, forget it, that was days ago.

161 INTERCUT JOAN AND JACK 161

She smiles wickedly, looks in a hand mirror and applies some makeup.

JOAN
(into phone)
No, it was insensitive of us. Caroline had every right to be angry.

JACK
Well, she was furious. We're not talking... or anything else.

JOAN
Oh, dear Jack... you need someone to talk to: A shoulder to cry on. I'm coming right over.

She hangs up before Jack can protest. The front DOOR KNOCKER BANGS... Jack looks at the phone still in his hand. He is slightly taken aback. He turns toward the sound.

162 JACK'S POV 162

A SLIGHTLY DISTORTED VIEW of the front door.

MUSIC: The "Now Voyager" THEME, BUILDING THROUGHOUT.

The front door opens and Joan Hampton stands there in a sheer blouse, short skirt and high heels. She looks phenomenally sexy.

163 ANGLE ON JACK AND JOAN 163

As she starts to walk toward him. There is a FAINT ECHO to all the SOUND.

JOAN
I came as fast as I could.

Jack stands to meet her.

JACK
You sure did. You look fabulous.

JOAN
So do you, Jack.

JACK *
I do...?

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED: 163

She strokes his shirt, then starts unbuttoning it as she talks...

JACK
(continuing)
What do you think of this shirt?

JOAN
Flannel gets me hot.

JACK
(nervously)
Don't you find me overweight?
Y'think I'm fat?

JOAN
I like a man with a little meat
on his bones.

JACK
Y'know, Caroline hates this beard.

Joan moves closer into him...

JOAN
(mouthing)
I know. I love it.

She puts her arms around his neck, pulling his hair teasingly.

JOAN
(continuing)
You know what I want, Jack.

She pulls Jack back by his hair and kisses him full on the mouth.

Abruptly, the front DOOR SLAMS shut.

Jack and Joan look up.

163A THEIR POV 163A

Caroline stands in the doorway in full length fur.

CAROLINE
How could you, Jack?! And you,
Joan, you're supposed to be
my friend!

163B BACK TO SCENE 163B

Jack and Joan separate as Caroline approaches.

JOAN
He's too much man to be left alone, Caroline.

Caroline reaches into her purse and pulls out a .45 automatic pistol, levels the gun at Jack and Joan, deciding.

JACK
(panicking)
My God, Caroline, what are you doing? It was just one kiss!

JOAN
(cockily)
You're not the first wife to pull a gun on me.

JACK
The children... they're right outside.

CAROLINE
Oh, that's all right.
(puts silencer on gun)
They'll never hear a thing.

JACK *
Wait a minute... before you shoot, where'd you get that coat?

CAROLINE *
Oh, this, it's nothing. Just a little gift from Ron.

JACK *
What?!!

CAROLINE *
(exasperated)
What was I supposed to do, say no? Would that make a difference? Would that change anything.

JACK
All right, go ahead... shoot. I deserve it. I'm guilty!

(CONTINUED)

163B CONTINUED: 163B

pk

CAROLINE
What was it? The kids, the cleaning...? What got to you, Jack?

JACK
The boredom, the repetition, the days flowing one into the next, the loneliness...

CAROLINE
I did it, Jack. I did it for eight years.

JACK
I know, I know... Don't you think I know!

Joan suddenly grabs the gun in Caroline's hand. They struggle. Jack tries to stop them. Abruptly, the GUN GOES OFF! Caroline and Joan separate in horror as Jack staggers back across the room, knocking a lamp and table over, clutching at his chest... Finally, Jack falls back across the couch...

FADE TO BLACK:

164 thru 169 OMITTED 164 thru 169

FADE IN:

170 CLOSE ON "THE END" TITLE CARD 170 *

With "WARNER BROS. LOGO." *

PULL BACK to REVEAL it's on Jack's TV. Abruptly, the front DOOR KNOCKER BANGS. *

The SOUND jolts Jack out of his reverie. His flannel shirt, however, is open and he is rubbing his perspiring chest.

He runs and opens the front door. It's Joan in slacks and blouse. Jack buttons his shirt.

JACK
(panicked)
I can't, Joan... I can't! How could you do this to me?!

(CONTINUED)

170 CONTINUED: 170

JOAN
(confused)
Do what? You called me! Something about watching your kids... said you had to go see a friend.

JACK
Right! Right... Watch the kids, I gotta go see a friend.

Jack races out, SLAMMING the door. Almost immediately he opens it again.

JACK
(continuing)
A guy... okay?

JOAN
(still confused)
Sure, Jack.

Jack bolts from the house again, SLAMMING the door.

171 EXT. SUBURBAN TRACT HOUSE - DAY 171

It is in dire need of repair and renovation. There is a slightly tilted "FOR SALE" sign on the overgrown lawn. A Ford station wagon, with a "FOR SALE" sign in the rear window, sits in the driveway. The porch LIGHT is STILL ON.

Jack parks his car on the street, gets out and starts to walk toward the house. As he does, the door opens and a woman, carrying a floor lamp, appears at the door with Larry Williams. Larry notices Jack approaching and sort of waves at him. Larry is still in his robe and slippers. They exchange greetings. A "GARAGE SALE" sign is tacked to a tree. *

172 INT. HOUSE - DAY 172

Jack steps in and looks around warily. The place needs a mommmental house cleaning. Every item in the room has a price tag hanging from it.

LARRY
Stop-gap, Jack. I needed the cash flow till we get called back to work. * * *

JACK
Where's Marilyn and the kids?

(CONTINUED)

172 CONTINUED: 172

LARRY
In Chicago. With her folks. I guess it was hard for her seeing me like this.

Larry's dog, a sweet little mutt, enters the room and nuzzles Jack's leg. Jack leans down to pat the dog and sees there's a "FOR SALE" sign hanging from his collar. The DOORBELL RINGS and Larry answers it. It is a MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE.

MAN
Saw your ad.

LARRY
Have a look around. Everything's negotiable.

The couple look around the living room, then walk off into another room, as Larry returns. Jack notices that there is a price tag on the back of his robe.

173 EXT. LARRY'S BACKYARD - DAY 173

A rusting lawn mower sits helpless in the tall weeds.

Larry is grilling hotdogs on a rusty Weber, listlessly turning them with a pair of pliers. Jack sits nearby on a shabby lawn chair. They're both drinking beer.

LARRY
Jinx said we could get called back any day now.

JACK
(exploding)
He's lying, Larry! I got it straight from a guy in personnel. Jinx made budget cuts by firing half the department. It made him look great upstairs. Then, he gave himself a raise. Forget Jinx. Lar, you gotta get on with your life.

LARRY
Why?

Jack jumps up from the armchair.

MUSIC: INSPIRATIONAL -- BUILDING THROUGHOUT.

(CONTINUED)

173 CONTINUED: 173

JACK
Okay, so maybe we're on the ropes, and we're taking a pretty good beating... and like, one eye is beginning to close, okay? But, let me tell you something.

LARRY
The ribs, don't forget the ribs.

JACK
Right... And our ribs are pretty badly bruised from the body punches. But, like in "Rocky," we're comin' off the ropes swinging and we're gonna stand toe-to-toe like he did with Apollo Creed, and we're going to win that championship. *

LARRY
That was in "Rocky II." In "Rocky I," he lost.

JACK
Lar, you're missing the point. He went the distance... He didn't quit! He didn't give up!

Jack seems to have rekindled some sort of spark in Larry. Just at that moment, the middle-aged couple appears at the back door. The Man is holding Larry's dog.

WOMAN *
'Scuse me... How much for this dog?

LARRY
Wha...? It's on the tag.
(catching himself)
Put that dog down! He's not for sale.

The Man and his wife seem confused by Larry's attitude.

LARRY
(continuing)
I love that dog. My kid loves that dog. Nothing in the house is for sale. Get out!

Totally bewildered, the Man puts the dog down, turns and re-enters the house, as Jack grabs Larry in an embrace, and the MUSIC SWELLS.

MONTAGE:

Heroic "Rocky"-type MUSIC blended from previous sequence.

174 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CLOSEUP - JACK'S FACE - DAY 174

As he finishes shaving. He rinses off the shaving cream and splashes on some skin bracer. There is a look of fierce determination in his eyes.

175 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - DAY 175

Jack walks across the unkempt lawn behind a lawn mower from right to left. *

176 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT 176

Jack walks with a CRYING Megan across the floor from left to right.

177 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - DAY 177

Jack climbs up a ladder with a bucket and window squeegee.

178 INT. FOYER - DAY 178

Jack comes down the stairs with his arms loaded with rubbish.

179 INT. GYM - DAY 179

Jack and the "Poker Ladies" are doing jazzercise in an exercise class.

180 INT. KITCHEN - DAY 180

Jack is on the phone, checking off a want ad and making a notation in his date book.

A181 EXT. MONTESSORI SCHOOL - HIGH ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY A181 *

181 EXT. MONTESSORI SCHOOL - DAY 181 *

A station wagon has pulled in the wrong way and is facing angry mothers. A figure in a school crossing * monitor outfit hurries to the car and opens the doors * for the kids.

182 EXT. CAR WINDOW - DAY 182

We see it's Jack in the outfit. He leans in the * window and addresses the sheepish man driving.

JACK
South to drop off, north to pick up.

END MONTAGE:

183 INT. BOYS' BEDROOM - AFTERNOON 183

Jack sits on the bed looking at Kenny who's sitting on the floor sucking his thumb and stroking his blanket -- his "woobie."

JACK
Kenny, we've got to have a man-to-man conversation.

He leans toward Kenny.

JACK
(continuing)
Your woobie's disgusting.

Kenny looks up at Jack with alarm. Jack kneels down and crawls over to him. He takes a corner of the woobie and gives it a gentle tug.

JACK
(continuing)
Can Daddy have it? Please?

Kenny won't give it up.

JACK
(continuing; soft; soothing)
You little guys start out with woobies and you think they're great, but then after a while, you want more security, so you go to big, wool blankets and then to electric blankets and quilts, and before you know it, you're strung out on bedspreads.

(CONTINUED)

183 CONTINUED: 183

pk Kenny's unconvinced.

JACK
(continuing)
Okay, cold turkey time. One, two...

Jack pulls the woobie away from Kenny.

JACK
(continuing)
Three!

Kenny bursts into tears. Jack walks out of the room and closes the door.

Kenny goes slightly berserk... throwing toys, tearing at the bed, throwing clothes out of the closet... total withdrawl freakout!

184 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY 184

Jack stands with his back to the door, tears in his eyes, listening to the riot going on inside... Kenny's SCREAMING gets LOUDER... It wakes Megan. She starts CRYING.

Jack stares at Alex standing next to him... then starts to go back in. Alex stops him.

ALEX
He'll be okay, Dad. You had to do it.

JACK
(repeating)
I had to do it. I had to do it!

Jack walks into Megan's room wiping his eyes... Alex watches him go. He's proud of his old man.

185 thru B191 OMITTED 185 thru B191 *

192 INT. KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON 192

Jack is cooking.

(CONTINUED)

192 CONTINUED: 192

He's in total control. He's got three pots on the stove, all simmering away. He checks one, tastes another and turns down the heat on the third. Next, he checks the oven -- everything's okay there, too.

Jack refers to his cookbook one more time, checks his watch and enters:

193 INT. DINING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON 193

The table is set for two -- candles, crystal and silver. Jack refolds the napkin on one of the plates, rearranges the centerpiece of flowers, opens the wine so it can "breathe," then checks his watch and goes upstairs.

194 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT 194

Jack sits alone at the table in his suit and tie. The candles are now burned down... He's been waiting a long time. *

195 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - NIGHT 195

Caroline pulls into the driveway, parks and exits her car.

196 INT. FOYER - NIGHT 196

Caroline enters and stops as she sees the set table. She enters.

197 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT 197

Jack's gone, but there's a note on Caroline's plate. She picks it up, reads:

198 INSERT - NOTE 198

"CAROLINE: YOUR DINNER'S IN THE OVEN. COULDN'T WAIT UP. LOVE, JACK"

A199 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT A199 *

Master bedroom door opens and Jack, now in his pajamas and robe, tiptoes out and peers down stairway.

199 INT. FOYER 199 *

Jack tiptoes down the stairs and peeks into the family room. *

200 JACK'S POV 200 *

Caroline is asleep, her reports and papers spread all over next to the foil tray Jack had left in the oven.

A201 INT. FAMILY ROOM - SAME TIME A201*

Jack enters, takes another long look at the sleeping Caroline, smiles, then sits next to her, kisses her. She wakes.

(CONTINUED)

A201 CONTINUED: A201

JACK
Hi.

CAROLINE
(sleepy)
Oh, hi.

JACK
Tired?

CAROLINE
Just a little.
(beat; then)
Honey, you've been so terrific these last few weeks.

JACK
Let's go upstairs and you can tell me all about it. *

CAROLINE
That'd take too long. *

She pulls him down to her. *

DISSOLVE TO:

201 OMITTED 201

202 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - PRE-DAWN 202

202A INT. MASTER BEDROOM - SAME TIME 202A

Jack wakes up before the alarm, grinning from ear-to ear. He stretches luxuriously, then turns off the alarm and takes a moment to study Caroline's sleeping face on the pillow next to him. He then carefully slips out of bed.

203 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING 203

Jack splashes cold water on his face -- causing him to take in a deep breath, as he looks at himself in the mirror... Then he turns on the shower.

(CONTINUED)

204 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 204

Jack opens the drawn curtain, FLOODING the room with early morning SUNLIGHT, and gently shakes the sleeping Caroline.

(CONTINUED)

204 CONTINUED: 204

JACK
(softly)
C'mon, Caroline... wake up.

Caroline groans and stirs... squinting up at Jack.

JACK
(continuing)
Did you get much sleep?

CAROLINE
Me? I got enough of everything. *
I feel great.

JACK
(kisses her)
I'm glad. Your shower's ready.

He gathers up Caroline's clothes from the day before and exits.

205 INT. SECOND BATHROOM - SAME MORNING 205

As Jack passes through, he squirts toothpaste on two tiny children's toothbrushes, lays a pair of washcloths on the edge of the sink, and turns on the water.

206 INT. BOYS' BEDROOM - MORNING 206

Jack opens a dresser and takes out some neatly folded clothes and sets them on the end of each bed. He drops a pinch of fish food into a large fish tank, then opens the blinds FLOODING the room with LIGHT.

He grabs one little foot poking out from the covers of one of the beds and gives it an affectionate tug.

JACK
Kenny...

KENNY
(yawning)
Hi, Dad.

Jack kisses Kenny.

KENNY
I'll wake Alex.

207 INT. SHOWER STALL - CAROLINE 207

Her eyes closed, exhausted from lack of sleep, she lets the water beat on the side of her head... As she hears Jack enter, Caroline quickly breaks into song.

JACK
Get a move on, Caroline, you're running behind.

208 INT. SECOND BATHROOM 208

Jack walks through with Megan on his hip. He wipes both boys' faces, FLUSHES the TOILET, runs a comb through their hair, and scoots them on their way.

209 CLOSE ON SMALL TELEVISION 209

"Sesame Street" plays on the screen. *

210 INT. KITCHEN

Kenny eats his cereal while watching the TV. Alex reads the newspaper. Megan is in her walker drinking out of her bottle. *

Jack is buttering toast, wiping up spills, putting things away, bundling up the trash... Just a few of the thousand things he does in the mornings.

Caroline enters. She looks absolutely stunning. *
Jack and the rest of the family are truly impressed. *
She spots a gift wrapped box on the table. *

CAROLINE *
For me...?

Jack nods. She opens the gift... It's an elegant *
attache case. She opens the briefcase. Inside is a *
framed picture of Jack and the kids. *

CAROLINE *
(continuing)
Thank you, honey! Thank you, kids! It's fabulous!

JACK *
You really like it?

CAROLINE *
I love it! My very own briefcase. Who ever thought?

(CONTINUED)

210 CONTINUED: 210

KENNY *
Why can't you use Daddy's anymore?

CAROLINE *
Because Daddy's going to need his.

ALEX *
When?

Caroline shoots a look at Jack. *

CAROLINE *
Soon, honey. Any day now.
(beat; then)
Gotta run, guys, sorry. I'm late.

She kisses the boys, Megan... gulps down her coffee and hurries toward the front door. Jack follows with a sweet roll.

211 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - MORNING 211

Jack and Caroline stand in the front doorway and kiss. He hands her the sweet roll and she leaves.

HOLD on him a beat as he watches.

212 JACK'S POV 212

Of Caroline walking toward her car and getting in.

JACK (O.S.)
Good luck...

She waves and back the car out.

213 BACK TO JACK 213

A mixture of love and concern plays across his boyish face as he watches Caroline drive away.

214 INT. HALLWAY - RICHARDSON/FRANKEL AGENCY 214

Caroline paces up and down as the door to the conference conference room opens and three dejected creative teams walk out with Richardson. He looks troubled.

(CONTINUED)

214 CONTINUED: 214

CAROLINE
(almost afraid to ask)
How's it going?

EXEC. #5
Like getting your gums scraped.

RICHARDSON
You're on.

CAROLINE
So soon?

RICHARDSON
It didn't take Humphrey long to shoot down every campaign idea so far. You're our ace in the hole.

Caroline looks at the tired faces of the dejected creative teams, then to Richardson:

CAROLINE
There's just one thing. It would be easier for me if it was just the three of us.

RICHARDSON
Whatever you want... just don't let me down.

She takes a deep breath and squares her shoulders. She's ready.

215 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER 215

There is an air of distinct tension. Caroline sits down next to HOWARD HUMPHREY, President of Schooner Tuna. Humphrey is a tall, vain man in his early 50's. He's a man who is used to having things his own way. That's the way he likes it best.

Richardson sits next to him, nervously rubbing his sweating hands together.

HUMPHREY
Okay, you got my attention. Shoot.

(CONTINUED)

215 CONTINUED: 215

Caroline moves to a stand where there are three displays of Schooner Tuna. One sits on top of a pack of four glasses. One has a Hawaiian lei draped over it. The last has a can of the tuna packaged with a loaf of bread.

CAROLINE
I've done a little research, and here are the last three campaigns for selling Schooner Tuna.
(moves to glasses)
This one gave the customer four free glasses with every purchase. After three months, you were stuck with 60,000 glasses... not to mention the tuna.
(to Hawaiian exhibit)
This one offered a hundred free trips to Hawaii. Unfortunately, the contest started two days after the big hurricane. A big zilch, although you did manage to sell the 100,000 leis to the Don the Beachcomber restaurants.

HUMPHREY
What the hell is this... "This Is Your Life"?

Richardson's face starts to pale.

CAROLINE
The last campaign sounded terrific... "A Free loaf of bread with every can." The sales of the bread tripled in two months; the tuna sales didn't budge.

HUMPHREY
I hope to hell you're making a point.

CAROLINE
The point is, Mr. Humphrey, that the time for gimmicks and giveaways is over. I'm a housewife. Like housewives all over the country, I have to shop within a certain budget.
(MORE)

(continued)

215 CONTINUED: (2) 215

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
That budget has been decimated by inflation, job insecurity and unemployment. When we go into a market to shop, we're filled with fear, futility and frustration.

RICHARDSON
Good alliteration... fear, futility and frustration.

HUMPHREY
(to Richardson)
Shut up.
(to Caroline)
What the hell has all that to do with selling tuna?

CAROLINE
Those housewives need your help, not your gimmicks. We want somebody to tell us that they understand our problems... that they want to help. Here is a statement that I want on every counter in every supermarket in the country.
(pulls out paper; reads)
All of us at Schooner Tuna sympathize with those of you hit so hard in these trying economic times. In order to help you and your family, we are reducing the price of our tuna by fifty cents a can. Use that money to buy something else for your family. When this crisis is over, we'll go back to our regular prices. Until then, remember we're all in this together. Signed, Howard Humphrey, President, Schooner Tuna, "The Tuna With A Heart."

There is a moment of complete silence... a long, long moment.

RICHARDSON
(finally)
I... I'm sorry, Mr. Humphrey.

(CONTINUED)

215 CONTINUED: (3) 215

HUMPHREY
(slowly, sternly)
You're God damn right, you're sorry.
(getting louder)
Where in the hell have you been hiding this little lady?! She's not only selling tuna... she's selling America, boy! "The Tuna With A Heart!" I love this bleeding heart shit. It's American... that's what it is!!!!

CAROLINE
There's more!

HUMPHREY
(delirious)
More?

CAROLINE
You're going to be the new spokesman for Schooner Tuna! You'll be in every magazine and in every television commercial!

HUMPHREY
(modest)
No...

CAROLINE
Yes!

HUMPHREY
Yes?

ALL
Yes!

216 INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER 216

Eve and the three rejected teams crowd around the door listening. One or two peek through the cracked open door.

EXECUTIVE #5
(peeking inside)
Humphrey's laughing.

EXECUTIVE #3
(sarcastic)
How can you tell?

(CONTINUED)

216 CONTINUED: 216

EVE
Now, Caroline's crying.

EXECUTIVE #4
Son-of-a-bitch musta told her off.

EXECUTIVE #1
We're all going to be crying in a minute if she doesn't sell something.

EXECUTIVE #2
Quiet! They're all standing up. They're shaking hands...

EVE
God dammit... Humphrey's kissing her.

EXECUTIVE #3
I shoulda tried that, dammit!

EVE
Shit. Now I'll never get her job.

217 OMITTED 217

218 INT. FOYER - THREE SHOT - ALEX, KENNY - MEGAN - DUSK 218

All in Halloween costumes. Alex as Dracula, Kenny as Mr. Spock of "Star Trek," and Megan, who is in her baby stroller, as Harpo Marx. They don't look happy.

WIDEN to reveal Caroline bent down talking to them. Her luggage is sitting on the floor.

ALEX
Why do you have to go to California?

CAROLINE
That's where we're making my tuna commercial, sweetheart.

KENNY
(whining)
Can't you go tomorrow, Mommy?

CAROLINE
I wish I could, baby, but everyone's leaving tonight. I'll be back before you know it. Cross my heart.

(CONTINUED)

218 CONTINUED: 218

Caroline crosses her heart and hugs Kenny and Alex, then Megan. A CHAUFFEUR enters and picks up her bags. *

CHAUFFEUR *
Eight o'clock flight, Mrs. Butler. *
We should leave as soon as possible. *

CAROLINE *
Okay. *
(calling) *
Jack...

(CONTINUED)

218 CONTINUED: 218

As the Chauffeur picks up the bags and exits, a DOOR upstairs SLAMS. Moments later, Jack appears at the top of the stairs, dressed as a witch with a big, ugly rubber nose and phony teeth.

JACK
Anybody seen my bottle of freeze-dried bat wings?

Alex and Kenny SCREAM and take off out of the house as Jack comes down the stairs and joins Caroline.

CAROLINE
The car's waiting. I've gotta get going.

Jack just nods, then starts to wheel Megan out the door.

219 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - DUSK 219

As Jack, Caroline and Megan exit, closing the door behind them. Kenny and Alex jump out of the bushes trying to scare mom and dad. They run off.

Jack and Caroline walk toward the limo. The Chauffeur holds the door open. They're not saying anything, just walking. Finally:

CAROLINE
There was nothing I could do.

JACK
Two hours' notice and you're off to Los Angeles...
(snapping fingers)
... just like that?

CAROLINE
That's the way this business is. Jack, today I convinced a man to spend eleven million dollars based on my ideas.

JACK
Great, then it should be easy for you to convince your kids not to be unhappy.

(CONTINUED)

219 CONTINUED: 219

They arrive at the car. The Chauffeur stands waiting.

CAROLINE
(to Chauffeur)
That's all right, I'll get in myself.

The Chauffeur goes around and gets into the car and starts it up as they talk. People in costumes go by on the street.

CAROLINE
(continuing; to Jack)
I'll be back in less than a week.

JACK
It doesn't matter. Because even when you're here, you're not here. Did you know that Megan cut two new teeth, and that Alex is playing football? And Kenny's security blanket... did you notice it's gone?

Just then, Joan, dressed as "Wonder Woman," with her kids, pass by. They wave and go on. *

JACK
(continuing)
You know, I feel like I've lost my best friend. If you had been here for Halloween, I was going to suggest you go as a ghost. *

The rear window lowers and Richardson sticks his head out and taps his watch. *

RICHARDSON *
Caroline... we're going to have to roll.

Caroline nods okay. *

CAROLINE
What do you want me to do, Jack, fail?

JACK
Of course not. Caroline, you gave me some good advice once. Now, let me give you some. I've been where you are now. It's easy to forget what's important. Don't.

(CONTINUED)

219 CONTINUED: (2) 219

Their eyes meet. It's a very significant moment for both of them. Caroline leans to kiss Jack goodbye, but it's almost impossible to get around his witch's nose, so she gives him a peck on the cheek.

CAROLINE
We'll talk about it when I get back.

JACK
Get going. You're gonna miss your plane.

Caroline enters the limo as Jack joins the kids.

220 INT. LIMO 220

As it moves off. Caroline peers out of the window.

221 HER POV 221

Of the Butler family sans Caroline, going off hand-in-hand, trick-or-treating.

A222 EXT. STREET - NIGHT A222 *

A large "E.T." pokes its head out from behind a tree.

"E.T."
(to Jack)
Little woman's off again, huh?

JACK
Shut up, Annette.

Annette/"E.T." turns away as Jack and the kids walk off.

B222 EXT. BUTLER STREET - DAY B222 *

An old VW Bug weaves down the street. Abruptly, it pulls over careening off a trashcan and then the curb in its attempt to park in front of the Butler house.

222 INT. SECOND BATHROOM - DAY 222

Megan sits on the toilet looking up at an impatient Jack who is in his three-piece suit.

(CONTINUED)

222 CONTINUED: 222

JACK
Come on, sweetheart. Do it for Daddy and I'll buy you a Porsche when you're sixteen.

She just smiles. He moves to the door, calls out:

JACK
(continuing)
Is she here yet?

ALEX'S VOICE
(from stairs)
Not yet. Relax, Dad, there's plenty of time.

The front DOOR KNOCKER BANGS.

223 INT. FOYER 223

Jack seems relieved. He opens the door and goes into mild shock.

JACK
Who are you?

224 JACK'S POV OF THE BABYSITTER 224

A sixteen-year-old motorhead. She has triple-pierced ears, short butch hair, super mini, yellow tights, roller skates, leather jacket and "Walkman."

BABYSITTER
Your babysitter. Debbie asked me to sub for her. *

225 TWO SHOT - JACK AND THE BABYSITTER 225

JACK
What?

BABYSITTER
C'mon, you know Debbie. She's a flake.

226 INT. OFFICE RECEPTION AREA - LATER 226

CAMERA PANS a row of a half-dozen job APPLICANTS. They're all youngish men in their 20's-to-early-30's, well dressed and eager.

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED: 226

The CAMERA COMES to REST on Jack, seated on a couch between Kenny and Alex, holding Megan on his knee.

A very pretty, young receptionist (JULIE), sits at a desk applying nail polish. This is probably the most taxing thing she will do all day. Her PHONE BUZZES. She picks up the receiver and listens for a moment.

JULIE
Mr. Butler...

Jack rises, places Megan in her stroller, approaches Julie.

JACK
Would you mind keeping an eye on the kids while I'm in there?

JULIE
I'm not having kids, I'm not watching kids.

Jack motions to Alex.

JACK
Alex, I'm in a jam. I need double coverage. You on Megan and Kenny. Can you handle it?

Alex nods.

ALEX
High five.

Alex reaches up and gives Jack a "high five." Jack turns and goes in for his interview.

227 INT. YAMADA'S OFFICE 227

TOSHIRO YAMADA, President and founder of Yamatronics, sits across the desk from Jack. As Yamada reads his resume, Jack studies him and Yamada's TWO ASSISTANTS. The three Oriental men are dressed alike, in conservative dark blue suits. Yamada speaks with a certain dedication that borders on fanaticism.

YAMADA
I'm very impressed with your background, Jack.

(CONTINUED)

227 CONTINUED: 227

JACK
Thank you, Mr. Yamada.

YAMADA
You have any idea what we're doing here?

JACK
Robotics. You make industrial robots that do all sorts of jobs. right?

YAMADA
Partially.
(inspired)
Jack, I feel that we're on the cutting edge of the new industrial revolution. We're developing machines that will respond to spoken command. Machines that can think.

Jack gets caught up in Yamada's enthusiasm. He moves forward.

YAMADA
(continuing)
Does that interest you, Jack?

JACK
Sure does, Mr. Yamada.

YAMADA
Scares you, too, doesn't it?

JACK
No, sir, I want in on it.

Yamada confers a moment with his two Assistants, then: *

YAMADA
There's just one thing, you have a sizeable family. This is a new industry. It takes a lot of time and dedication. It's very intense.

JACK
Look, Mr. Yamada, I know what's going through your head right now, but Jack Butler is the kind of guy you want. He's the kind of guy who can dedicate himself to his job and keep his family life balanced beautifully.

(CONTINUED)

227 CONTINUED: (2) 227

ALEX (O.S.)
Dad!

JACK
Excuse me.

Jack runs to the door, opens it and looks out.

228 INT: HALLWAY - JACK'S POV 228

Alex is standing in the hall waving at him to come on.

ALEX
Dad... Megan!

229 JACK 229

He motions that he'll be right there and dashes back into Yamada's office.

230 INT. YAMADA'S OFFICE 230

JACK
Where was I...?

YAMADA
Balancing your job and your family life beautifully.

JACK
Right. All I'm gonna say is if you let Jack Butler walk out of here without giving him a job, you're making the biggest mistake of your life.

ALEX (O.S.)
Dad... Hurry.

YAMADA
Let us think about it.

Jack's desperate. He fixes Yamada with a look and dashes off.

231 INT. MEN'S ROOM - LATER 231

Jack is changing Megan on the sink. Kenny and Alex are staring into the urinals.

(CONTINUED)

231 CONTINUED: 231

JACK
I don't know why you had to do this now, Megan.

Jack looks around frantically for paper towels.

JACK
(continuing)
No damn towels! Alex! Get me some toilet paper!

Alex and Kenny go into two separate stalls.

ALEX (O.S.)
The toilet paper's all wet, Dad.

Jack grits his teeth.

JACK
Not the paper in the toilet! The paper on the wall!

ALEX (O.S.)
Oh, <u>that</u> paper!

A beat later, Kenny and Alex walk out with the end of the roll of paper, unravelling it. Alex hands the end of the paper to Jack.

JACK
(with a sigh)
Thank you.

Jack wads up a ball, wets it and then pats Megan's tush. Alex and Kenny continue to unravel more toilet paper. There are now two ribbons of toilet paper running across the floor.

JACK
(continuing)
Cut it out! I have enough!

Jack wads up the dirty diaper. He doesn't know what to do with it. He remembers his diaper throwing ability. He sets and throws. The diaper sails across the bathroom and over a stall with a closed door, and into the john.

MAN (O.S.)
(Oriental)
Hey!

(CONTINUED)

231 CONTINUED: (2) 231

JACK
Sorry.

ALEX
You have to dry her off or she gets a rash.

Jack holds Megan's rear end up to the hand dryer on the wall. Kenny and Alex are holding wads of toilet paper and FLUSHING the URINALS. The men's room is a mess.

Jack looks over his shoulder as the door opens. It is Toshiro Yamada and his two Assistants. They all react with surprise.

232 INT. HOLLYWOOD SOUND STAGE - AFTERNOON 232

We are in the middle of a Commercial Shoot for Schooner Tuna. A full crew -- lights, camera... everything. (NOTE: We should not see the set up of the shot yet.) The DIRECTOR, young and artistic obviously, turns to his ASSISTANT. Behind them we can see Caroline and Richardson waiting anxiously.

DIRECTOR
Are we ready for another take?

ASSISTANT
Mr. Humphrey wants the music to play over the scene.

DIRECTOR
Didn't you explain to him we'd dub in the music later?

ASSISTANT
He says it gets him in the mood. You want to tell him no?

DIRECTOR
I'd like to tell him he's full of -- tuna.
(sighs)
Go ahead and roll 'em.

ASSISTANT
(loud)
Okay, stand by for a take.

A BELL RINGS on stage for quiet.

ASSISTANT
(continuing)
Roll 'em!

233 REVERSE ANGLE - HUMPHREY AND DISPLAY 233

We see it for the first time. The back drop should be a huge American flag printed on a flat. Humphrey wears an Uncle Sam hat jauntily on his head, carries a tiny American flag in one hand and a can of Schooner tuna in the other. A big red heart is pinned to his lapel.

A CAMERA ASSISTANT pushes a clap board in front of Humphrey's face.

CAMERA ASSISTANT
Schooner Tuna commercial - take twenty-four!

He darts away.

DIRECTOR (V.O.)
Start the playback!

We hear a STIRRING RENDITION OF "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL."

DIRECTOR (V.O.)
(continuing)
Action!

HUMPHREY
My fellow Americans...

234 CLOSE SHOT CAROLINE AND RICHARDSON 234

She's stunned.

CAROLINE
Who put that in?

RICHARDSON
(shrugs)
One little line, Caroline.

We INTERCUT Humphrey's commercial during the rest of the whispered scene between Caroline and Richardson.

RICHARDSON
(seductively)
How about a little dinner when we're through?

CAROLINE
I'm too tired. As soon as we finish here, I just want to go back to the hotel and get into a nice hot tub.

(CONTINUED)

234 CONTINUED: 234

RICHARDSON
(conspiratorially)
Yeah! Why don't you do that.

235 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT 235

Joan's black GTO moves through light traffic.

236 INT. GTO - MOVING 236

Joan is driving. Jack is in the other bucket seat. Two other women, from the poker game, are in the back. Everyone's a little high.

JACK
You know, I actually think I had a job for about thirty seconds.

JOAN
Forget it, Jack. The important thing is you weren't fired.

Everyone but Jack laughs.

JACK
Why won't you tell me where we're going?

JOAN
It's a surprise.

Abruptly, the GTO turns into a parking lot. Jack looks out the window, then:

JACK
Hey, wait a minute. I'm not going in there.

JOAN
(parking car)
You're out with the girls now, Jack. Just go with it.

237 INT. NIGHTCLUB 237

MUSIC: LOUD, HEAVY DISCO

The SOUND of SCREAMING WOMEN is pervasive.

238 CLOSE ON JACK 238

pk Hunched down at one of the ringside tables.

JACK
Why'd you do this to me?

JOAN (O.S.)
You needed to have a good time.

JACK
I'm not having a good time.

239 WIDER ANGLE 239

Revealing that we are in a club like Chippendale's. Three male dancers gyrate on the stage. One dances his way out of a pair of silver space pants. He will soon be down to his G-string and space boots. *

The room is filled with out-of-control women and one man -- Jack.

JOAN
Besides, when was the last time you were surrounded by this many hot-to-trot women?

WOMAN IN CROWD
(shouting)
Take it off. Take it all off.

Jack slumps into his chair and pulls his shoulders up in a vain attempt to hide himself. Joan sticks her fingers in her mouth and lets out a ferocious WOLF-WHISTLE.

JOAN
Hey, "Flash," over here...!

Jack grimaces and shrinks even lower in his seat, as Joan sticks some money into her cleavage and the other women urge the dancer over to their table.

240 JACK'S POV 240

As the dancer makes his way over to their table.

A241 BACK TO SCENE A241 *

Joan jumps up and sticks her chest out at the dancer. He happily takes the money out of her bra and lays a big kiss on her. Jack's eyes widen, and he looks horrified.

JOAN
(very excited; to Jack)
Wait till you see where I put the money next time!

JACK *
(monotone)
I can hardly wait.

241 BACK TO JACK 241

As he turns his eyes away from the stage. The women SHRIEK and wave dollar bills. Joan jabs Jack in the ribs.

JOAN
He's looking at <u>you</u>.

Jack looks up with alarm.

242 CLOSE ON SPACE DANCER 242

He's smiling down at Jack.

243 BACK TO JACK 243

As all eyes turn to him. Jack, feeling very intimidated, tries to surrepticiously hand the dancer a bill. * The dancer grabs it in his teeth. *

244 INT. HOTEL BATHROOM 244

A luxurious Beverly Hills Hotel-type bathroom. The tub is filling up with hot, bubbly water. A SOFT ROCK RADIO STATION is HEARD. A glass, a split of champagne, a large bowl of giant, long-stemmed strawberries, and a silver cup full of powdered sugar, sits on the table.

Caroline, clad in a plush terrycloth robe, stands at the mirror massaging her neck as she rotates it. It's been a long, tiring day. Caroline gazes at herself in the mirror for a long moment.

She crosses to the tub, pours herself a glass of champagne and starts to undo her robe.

245 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - NIGHT 245

Joan's GTO backs out of the driveway, as Jack waves to them.

JACK
Thanks, girls. Don't call me, I'll call you.

246 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - NIGHT 246

Jack enters and crosses to the family room.

247 INT. BUTLER FAMILY ROOM 247 *

Annette is sitting on the couch, flanked by Alex and Kenny, who are fast asleep. Annette's watching TV.

JACK
Now I know why you offered to sit with the kids. You knew where they were taking me, didn't you?

ANNETTE
Yup.

Annette starts to laugh uncontrollably.

JACK
Real funny, Annette.

The kids wake up.

ALEX
Daddy!

JACK
Hi, sport. I'm taking you to to bed.

ALEX
No... no... I want to talk to Mommy.

JACK
Mommy's in California.

KENNY
I want to talk to Mommy, too. Call her. Pleeeeze.

JACK
Tomorrow. It's too late now.

(CONTINUED)

247 CONTINUED: 247 *

ANNETTE
It's only eight-thirty in California.

Jack shoots Annette a look, as Kenny and Alex plead with him. Jack goes over to the phone.

248 INT. HOTEL SUITE - SAME TIME 248

As the door opens and a room service table is rolled in. Ron Richardson, dressed in an elegant robe over his pajamas, follows the waiter in. The table is beautifully set, complete with two silver candlesticks, an ice bucket with a bottle of champagne in it, and a dozen roses. The waiter lights the candles. * * *

Richardson tips him , and he exits. *

249 ANOTHER ANGLE 249

As Richardson goes about the room setting a romantic scene. As a final touch, he DIMS the room LIGHTS and then goes to change the station of the radio. He begins to twist the dial.

250 INT. HOTEL SUITE BATHROOM 250

Caroline is relaxing in the tub with her eyes shut. Her eyes open with a start as she hears the RADIO STATION GOIND from SOFT MUSIC to a SPANISH SPEAKING STATION to a BORN AGAIN MINISTRY of the air, to a PUNK ROCK SONG, and finally coming to REST on a CLASSICAL STATION. As she starts to rise from the tub:

251 INT. HOTEL SUITE LIVING ROOM 251

As Richardson moves across the living room toward the bedroom, the PHONE RINGS. Instinctively, he picks it up, and:

RICHARDSON
(hushed voice)
Hello... Alex who?

252 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - NIGHT 252

Alex is holding the phone and looking at Jack.

ALEX
I don't know... some guy.

(CONTINUED)

252 CONTINUED: 252

Jack grabs the phone out of Alex's hand.

JACK
Is Caroline Butler there?

253 INTERCUT - JACK AND RICHARDSON 253

RICHARDSON
She's in the tub. Who's this?

JACK
Who the hell is this?

Richardson hangs up. Jack looks at the phone angrily, then SLAMS it down. This scene is etched in Annette's mind.

254 INT. HOTEL SUITE LIVING ROOM 254 *

Caroline enters from the bathroom wearing a robe. She's surprised to find Richardson there.

CAROLINE
What are you doing? Who was that?

RICHARDSON
Nobody.

CAROLINE
Did I hear you say "Alex?"

RICHARDSON
(innocently)
No.

Caroline looks at him a beat.

CAROLINE
All right... What are you doing here?

RICHARDSON
Someone has to pour the champagne.

Richardson moves to the bucket and glasses.

CAROLINE
I think you'd better go.

She moves to the door to show him out. He grabs her as she crosses.

(CONTINUED)

254 CONTINUED: 254 *

RICHARDSON
Don't do this, Caroline. You've been waiting for this opportunity as long as I have.

CAROLINE
What?

RICHARDSON
You can't fool me. I've been watching you over these past few months. You've blossomed. You're not the same shy, insecure woman you were when you started working for me.

CAROLINE
Have you been drinking?

RICHARDSON
Of course.

CAROLINE
Ron... get out.

RICHARDSON
(advancing)
You're lovely when you're angry.

CAROLINE
Now.

Richardson lunges at her. She gets away, runs around the table and picks up the flower vase.

RICHARDSON
Don't be coy, Caroline.

Caroline throws the vase, he ducks and it CRASHES against a wall.

RICHARDSON
(continuing)
You're driving me wild.

He makes another lunge at her and catches her. She swings wildly and punches him right in the eye. He falls to his knees, shakes his head to clear it, then looks up:

RICHARDSON
(continuing)
Playing hard to get, huh?

255 INT. BUTLER FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT 255

Jack sits across from Annette. They are both drinking beer and staring at each other.

ANNETTE
Get used to it, Jack. There's nothing you can do about it. You can't take matters into your own hands. You've got the responsibilities now. The kids, the house. All you can do is stay here and wait.

Abruptly, the PHONE STARS RINGING. Jack stares at it.

ANNETTE
(continuing)
Aren't you going to answer it? That's the fourth time it's rung in the last hour.

JACK
Can't do anything about it, huh?!

Jack grabs the phone cord and goes around the room ripping it out of the wall.

JACK
(continuing)
That better?

He's really charged up now.

JACK
(continuing)
Made me feel better.
(beat' then)
You better go home, Annette. I'm about to take matters into my own hands.

ANNETTE *
My lips are sealed. Why don't you go to sleep. You'll feel better about things in the morning.

She quickly exits.

256 OMITTED 256

257 EXT. JOAN'S HOUSE - DAY 257 *

Joan and Annette stand in the driveway talking.

(CONTINUED)

257 CONTINUED: 257 *

JOAN
Thank you. Than you verry... verry much.

Joan quickly gets into her GTO and BURNS RUBBER backing out of the driveway and SCREECHES away down the street past the smiling Annette.

258 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - HIGH NOON 258

Jack stands at one end as "Jaws" approaches from the other. Jack watches carefully as "Jaws" circles him. Finally, Jack clicks a small device in his hand.

JACK
Stay.

"Jaws" stops dead in its tracks, its motor cutting off.

Jack presses another button on his device.

259 INT. SECOND BATHROOM - SAME TIME 259

Kenny stands near the toilet zipping up his pants. Abruptly, the TOILET FLUSHES. Kenny is surprised.

260 INT. MEGAN'S NURSERY 260

Megan stands up in her crib.

MEGAN
Daddy. Daddy!

Mobile above her heads starts turning and playing a lullaby... Megan starts to giggle. * *

261 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - SAME TIME 261

Jack watches "Jaws" vacuum back and forth across the room as Megan's VOICE is HEARD over the INTERCOM.

JACK
(to intercom)
Coming, baby.

262 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - AFTERNOON 262

Joan's GTO SCREECHES up in front. Joan gets out quickly, and moves past a Pest Control van, toward: * *

263 EXT. FRONT DOOR 263

Joan presses the new doorbell. It CHIMES. A small speaker box sits unobtrusively nearby.

JACK'S VOICE
(over speaker; recorded)
This is Jack Butler. There are children in the house. Please be patient, I'll be with you in a moment.

A beat, then the door opens. It's Alex. Joan enters.

264 INT. FOYER 264

Joan looks around. There's an expression of amazement on her face.

JOAN
(to Alex)
What happened?

265 JOAN'S POV 265

Nothing in the family room or the living room is the same. All the furniture has been rearranged.

ALEX (O.S.)
Dad did a whole lot of weird stuff... All night.

266 BACK TO SCENE 266

JOAN
(to Alex)
You got something to do?

Just then, Jack descends the stairs with Megan in his arms.

JACK
Hi, Joan.

Jack gives Alex a look. He understands. Jack then puts Megan in her walker... She toddles off after Alex toward the kitchen.

JOAN
You should have called me last night to take care of your burst of nervous energy.

JACK
Annette's sealed lips, right?

(CONTINUED)

266 CONTINUED: 266

JOAN
She only said one word, Jack.

JACK
Oh, what was that?

JOAN
Now!

The front door CHIME interrupts. Jack opens the door. It's Doris, the TV repair person.

DORIS
Trouble with that horizontal hold again? Somebody called.

JACK
Right.

She enters as Jack closes the door.

DORIS
The job didn't come through, huh?

Jack gives her a weary glance.

DORIS
(continuing)
Don't worry, it's on warranty.
(going off)
I know where it is.

As Doris heads for the family room she checks out Joan.

267 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - SAME TIME 267

A taxi pulls up behind Joan's car. Caroline hops out, pays the cabbie, picks up her bags... checks out Joan's car and walks toward the house past the TV repair van and the Pest Control van.

268 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - DINING ROOM WINDOW 268

Caroline sneaks through the shrubbery and peeks inside.

269 CAROLINE'S POV 269

Of Jack and Joan going upstairs...

270 BACK TO CAROLINE 270

She's shocked, jealous and angry.

271 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 271

Jack is pointing to his newly installed intercom.

JACK
... and whenever Megan makes a sound I can hear her.

JOAN
(flirting)
You're not a good engineer, Jack, you're a great engineer.
(vampy)
I wonder what else you're great at.

She moves toward Jack... He backs away.

JACK
Look, I'm kinda grimy and sweaty... Let me grab a shower.

JOAN
I like a man to smell like a man... But, why don't I join you.

Jack backs into the master bathroom, violently shaking his head "no."

JOAN
(continuing)
Then, let me know when I can come in and scrub your back.

He SLAMS the door shut. Joan turns around with a wicked smile on her lips... which instantly fades:

272 JOAN'S POV 272

Of Caroline standing in the doorway.

273 ANGLE ON THE TWO WOMEN 273

CAROLINE
Scrub your back?

A274 INT. MASTER BATHROOM A274

As a panicked Jack listens at the door.

A274 CONTINUED: A274 *

CAROLINE (O.S.)
(screams)
Scrub your back?!

B274 BACK TO SCENE B274

Caroline and Joan glare at each other. *

CAROLINE
What are you doing in my bedroom, Joan?

JOAN
Responding to someone in pain.
(uneasy)
Is it too early for a drink?

CAROLINE
Not today.

274 INT. MASTER BATHROOM 274

The shower is running, but Jack is not in it. Instead, he is nervously pacing up and down trying to decide what to do.

275 INT. LIVING ROOM 275 *

Alex, Kenny and Megan follow the Pest Control Man around the room. They are all eating cookies.

PEST CONTROL MAN
Ummm, these sure are good. Your Mommy make 'em?

ALEX
(proud)
No, my Dad.

Caroline and Joan enter.

ALEX/KENNY/MEGAN
Mommy! Mommy!

They run to her.

PEST CONTROL MAN
Long time no see, Mrs. Butler.
(beat; then)
Hi, Joan.

(CONTINUED)

275 CONTINUED: 275

CAROLINE
(to Pest Control Man)
Bert, would you take the kids into the kitchen for a little while?

A276 ANGLE ON PEST CONTROL MAN AND KIDS A276 *

As they walk off.

KENNY
Is there gonna be yelling?

PEST CONTROL MAN
Usually is...

They exit.

B276 BACK TO SCENE B276 *

Caroline and Joan face each other. They're both holding a whiskey glass. Caroline pours.

JOAN
What'll we drink to?

CAROLINE
How about Jack Butler? I think he's a hell of a guy.

DORIS (O.C.)
(from family room)
I'll drink to that.

They drink. Caroline refills both glasses, then:

CAROLINE
I don't know what's been going on here, and frankly, I don't care, because part of it's my fault. But, I know my husband, and I know me... and I know nothing happened to either one of us.

Caroline raises her glass. *

CAROLINE
(continuing)
So, no hard feelings, Joan... just adios... That's Spanish for "Get your ass out of here!"

(CONTINUED)

B276 CONTINUED: B276 *

Joan finishes her drink, sets the empty glass down and silently exits.

276 thru 282 OMITTED 276 thru 282

283 INT. FOYER 283

A defeated Joan crosses to the front door and SLAMS it on her way out. She does not see Jack standing on the stairway... but, he's heard everything.

284 INT. LIVING ROOM 284

Caroline sets her glass down and smiles as she HEARS the SCREECH of Joan's car driving away. She turns around and sees Jack standing in the doorway.

A culmination of eleven years of love and respect plays on both their faces.

Finally:

JACK
You're right, you know.

CAROLINE
You're damn right, I'm right.

They fly into each other's arms and kiss passionately. Caroline and Jack move as one person to the couch, lie down. The front door CHIMES, then the MUFFLED SOUNDS of:

JACK'S VOICE
(over speaker)
... Please, be patient, I'll be with you in a moment... in a moment... in a moment... in a moment...

285 INT. FOYER - SAME TIME 285 *

The Pest Control Man looks into the living room and sees Caroline and Jack still necking as the front DOOR KNOCKER BANGS. He smiles and opens the door. It's Jinx Latham.

JINX
Jack Butler in?

(CONTINUED)

285 CONTINUED: 285 *

PEST CONTROL MAN
He's kind of busy right now. Can I tell him what this is about?

JINX
It's personal...

Caroline and Jack enter as Jinx closes the door behind him.

JINX
(continuing; to Jack)
Jack, great news. I went to the wall with management. They finally agreed to take you back. Same job. Same salary. I fought like an animal.

Abruptly, the front DOOR CHIMES again. And Jack's MUFFLED VOICE is HEARD, STUCK... again.

Caroline opens the door. It's Larry. He bolts in, looking very excited.

LARRY
(out of breath)
Hi, Caroline. Jack, great news! I got your job back... with a raise.

JINX
What do you mean <u>you</u> got him his job back? You don't have <u>your</u> job back.

LARRY
That's right. I have <u>yours</u>. Jinx, you're fired!

Jinx does a slow burn as Caroline, Jack and Larry embrace.

JACK
I don't know what to say, Larry, thanks just isn't enough.

LARRY
Don't thank <u>me</u>, Jack. It was you. You did it, you turned me around...

(CONTINUED)

285 CONTINUED: (2) 285 *

Jack, Caroline and Larry all stare down at Jinx... He's on his knees in front of them.

JINX
(breaking down)
You gotta save me, Jack...

DORIS (O.S.)
(from family room)
Why? You didn't lose any sleep when you fired them.

Caroline looks at Doris, quizzically. Jack and Larry smile.

JACK
She's right. Now you can stuff it, Jinx.

The front DOORBELL CHIMES, again. Jack's VOICE, again.

EVERYONE
Come in... It's open.

286 THEIR POV 286 *

Of Ron Richardson, sheepishly opening the door and entering. There's a small welt under his right eye.

287 BACK TO SCENE 287 *

Richardson looks at Jack, then:

RICHARDSON
(covering his face)
For God's sake, don't hit me...! Please hear me out.
(beat; then)
Caroline, I want to beg your forgiveness and ask you to please come back to work for the agency. Humphrey threatened to pull the account if you don't come back.

Jack is shocked. Larry looks down at Jinx. They both shrug.

CAROLINE
I told you last night, I quit. And that's final. I'm a
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

287 CONTINUED: 287 *

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
housewife. I don't belong out there, I belong here, with my husband and kids.

JACK
No, you don't.

Now it's Caroline's turn to be surprised.

JACK
(continuing)
This is the hardest damned job in the world.

CAROLINE
And, I'm terrific at it.

JACK
You're terrific at your job, too.

RICHARDSON
Right. And we want her back at it.

In the b.g., Megan staggers into the room.

288 CLOSE ON MEGAN 288 *

She's holding an empty chili can. She drops it and gets a funny look on her face... Then, she BELCHES!

289 INT. BUTLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM 289 *

Caroline, Larry, Jinx, Richardson, the Pest Control Man and Doris all look at Megan in horror.

290 CLOSE ON CHILI CAN 290 *

As it rolls across the floor. Megan BELCHES again!

291 EXT. BUTLER HOUSE - DAY 291 *

The front door bursts open and Doris, the Pest Control Man, Richardson, Larry and Jinx bolt from the house. The door shuts.

JACK'S VOICE
(over speaker; recorded)
Thank you for coming to the Butler house. Please, come again.

(CONTINUED)

291 CONTINUED: 291 *

They all get into their vehicles and SQUEAL away down the street.

292 INT. FOYER - MOMENTS LATER 292 *

Alex, Kenny and Megan look up at Caroline and Jack standing face-to-face in an embrace.

CAROLINE
You fed Megan chili?

JACK
(grins)
You don't know what you've missed.

ROLL END CREDITS OVER:

293 CLOSE ON MEGAN 293 *

Lying on a blanket as a male hand and a female hand change her diaper.

FADE OUT.

THE END